



December 2025

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From the Chair

Tēnā tātou katoa

As we close out the year, I want to acknowledge your support of Music Therapy New Zealand in what has been another busy year in our community.



My thanks also goes to the Board (our renamed Council under our new rules) for their time and support of MThNZ

I acknowledge the efforts of our previous Executive Officer Sarah Cole, and the ongoing work by Barbara Lewis and Lisa Stanley in keeping us functioning as a community.

Welcome to Pam Watson as she begins her induction into MThNZ as our new EO.

I hope you get the opportunity to recharge your batteries in coming weeks with family and friends.

Meri Kirihimete ki a koe me te whānau.
Stephen Guerin

From the President

Well deserved congratulations and accolades to Alison Talmage. I was privileged to attend the CeleBRation Choir Christmas function and CeleBRation of Alison's PhD completion. I was able to briefly connect with the retiring Centre for Brain Research (CBR) Director Distinguished Prof Sir Richard Faull and the new CBR Director Prof Hanneke Hulst from The Netherlands.



What a joyous event that reflected looking back and moving forward with all that the Brain Research Centre has to offer.

Kindest regards
Linda Webb MNZM
President MThNZ

A portrait of a woman with short, grey hair and glasses, smiling warmly. She is wearing a light grey scarf and a dark blue patterned top. The background shows a body of water and a distant shoreline under a bright sky.

Ngā mihi
Pam

3/20

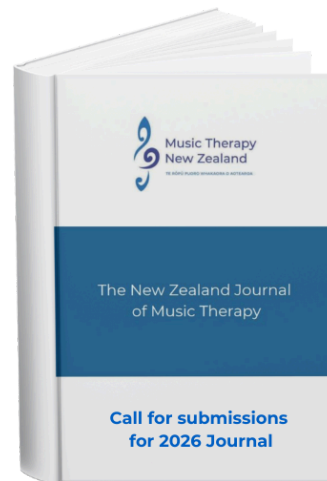
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- Christmas
Office Hours*
- MUSIC THERAPY OFFICE
- CLOSES ON 22ND DECEMBER 2025
- AND ————
- REOPENS ON 5TH JANUARY 2026
- FOR URGENT MATTERS PLEASE CONTACT
- stephen@musictherapy.org.nz
or info@musictherapy.org.nz

Co-Editors Dr Hyunah Cho and Dr Emily Langlois Hunt

4/20

Call for submissions for 2026 Journal

The Journal welcomes submissions in a wide variety of genres. Please refer to the [Journal webpage](#) for more information and to access the current Journal Guidelines. You are welcome to contact the editorial team for a preliminary discussion before submitting an article and submissions are accepted all year round.



Share your publications

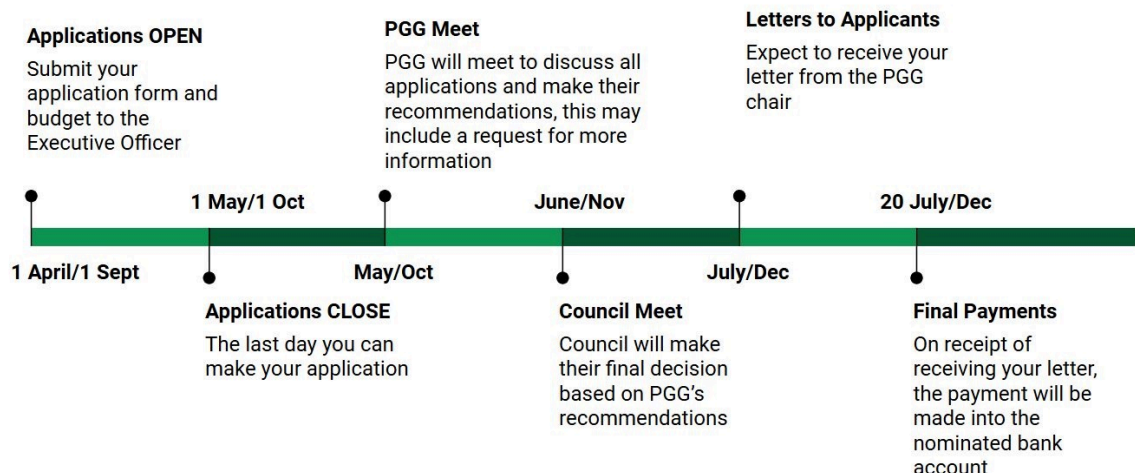
The Journal includes annual Theses and Publications alerts so that we can celebrate the work of NZ Registered Music Therapists and share their work beyond NZJMT. Please email us with details of any book chapters, scholarly articles or theses submitted to the library on completion of PhD/Masters which you would like to be included in our alert: journal@musictherapy.org.nz.

Projects Grants Group (PGG)

Reminder: Timeline for 1st Funding Applications 2026

The grant guidelines, application and reporting documents are undergoing some changes and we hope to have these ready in time for the April funding round. Please be aware of this if you are thinking of applying for a grant in the new year and watch out for updates via the website and Pulse.

Timeline for Funding Rounds



The next NZAG conference will be in Ōtautahi Christchurch in early December 2026. If you work with older people, do consider submitting a presentation abstract. The SoundsWell Singers' performance, led by Penny Warren and Megan Glass, was well received in 2024, and I have always felt welcome. Further info: <https://gerontology.org.nz>



Image: Alison Talmage, presenting at the 2025 NZAG conference at the University of Otago.



Music Therapy Week 10th - 15th April, 2026



Sinead Hegarty here, I am a Hawkes Bay based music therapist and member of the Music Therapy New Zealand Board. I am also proud to be part of the Music Therapy Week working group for 2026.

Since 2023 Music Therapy week has been held between the 10th to the 15th of April. Music therapy week is a chance to celebrate, advocate and share our profession with the wider community.

As a newly graduated music therapist in 2024, music therapy week was a fun and low pressure way for me to connect with my local community and establish myself in the profession. I really urge everyone, especially new therapists to get involved.

The theme for music therapy week will align with the conference theme “Te Poutama Hononga, Weaving Connections”. We hope this theme inspires you to share stories of the intersections of current practice with culture, identity, professional relationships, Disability and beyond.

We hope to build on publicity received in recent years, so if you have a story you want to share, or are thinking about writing for MusT or presenting at a conference on a topic related to this theme, we would love to hear from you.

If you would like to join the working group, in planning and organising music therapy week please be in touch. We aim to get a nice spread of representation from around the motu. If you are interested email me at sinead@musictherapy.org.nz, our next meeting will be held in the

new year.

For those of you wanting to be involved in other ways. Let us know what events you'd like to see/host, share your ideas and seeds of ideas here:

[Event submission form](#)

Ngā mihi nui,
Sinead Hegarty



Music Therapy New Zealand Conference 2026

When: 12–13 September

Where: Tāmaki Makarau Auckland

Theme: Te Poutama Hononga: Weaving Connections

The countdown is on for Conference 2026, to be held in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (venue to be confirmed) on Saturday 12 – Sunday 13 September, with an optional Friday workshop, Friday evening reception, and the conference dinner on Saturday. Keynote speakers and venue will be announced early in 2026.

We hope to include an optional early evening pre-conference reception on Friday September 11th at the Raukauri Music Therapy Centre. Additionally, preliminary plans are in place for Raukauri to offer a pre-conference workshop for music therapists on Friday afternoon. Further details will be available early in 2026.

Te Poutama Hononga: Weaving Connections

The 2026 conference theme celebrates the art of weaving together people, stories, and music, creating patterns of understanding, and community. Each thread represents a unique experience or voice, and through the process of weaving diverse strands, new relationships and meanings emerge.

The te reo name for our conference has been gifted by Matua Sonny Niha, kaumatua for the University of Auckland Centre for Brain Research. Te Poutama Hononga means "the connected journey of achievement and progress".

Our Logo, the Pikorua is a Māori symbol, often a single or double twist (figure-eight shape), representing the eternal journey of life, unbreakable bonds, friendship, loyalty, and the connection between people, families (whānau), and the spiritual world, inspired by intertwined fern fronds. It signifies paths that diverge but always remain connected,

symbolizing unity and the strength found in relationships

Call for Presentations – Spread the Word!

The call for presentations is now open and closes on Sunday 15 March 2026, 5pm.

The call is open to members, registered music therapists, allied professionals, students, and the general public. Please spread the word among your personal and professional networks. We welcome submissions for oral presentations, panels/round tables, workshops, posters, performances, shared musicking, and other creative formats that reflect our conference theme and reflect the diversity of practice, participation, theory, and collaboration. We welcome your critical reflections; magical moments; and your journey with music therapy or related fields.

Our audience will include members, registered music therapists, people with lived experience, allied health professionals, students, people involved in community groups or government agencies, and the wider public.

Please submit using [this Google Form](#):

(If you have any difficulty using the form, please email the Administrator for an alternative option.)

Conference Selection Committee

Invitations have been sent to potential Conference Selection Committee members. The committee will be announced as soon as all members are confirmed.

Registration

Registration will open in May 2026. A provisional conference programme will be published before registration opens.

Questions?

Please address all questions and inquiries to Barbara Lewis (Administrator):

admin@musictherapy.org.nz

Thanks to the Conference Working Group

My thanks to all members of our working group for their creativity, commitment, and open communication.

Ngā mihi nui kia

Irene van Schalkwyk, Kathryn Stevenson, Leesa Tilley, Rachel Foxell, Rachael Farrell, and expert administrator Barbara Lewis.

Alison Talmage

MThNZ Council Member

Conference 2026 Convenor

CALL FOR PRESENTERS & PERFORMERS

MThNZ Conference 2026

Calling all presenters and performers who wish to offer an oral presentation, panel/round table, workshop, poster, performance, shared musicking, and other creative formats that reflect our conference theme and reflect the diversity of practice, participation, theory, and collaboration. We welcome your critical reflections; magical moments; and your journey with music therapy or related fields.

The conference theme, Te Poutama Hononga: Weaving Connections, celebrates the art of weaving together people, stories, and music, creating patterns of understanding, and community. The te reo name, gifted by Matua Sonny Nehu (University of Auckland Centre for Brain Research) means “the connected journey of achievement and progress”. Each thread represents a unique experience or voice, and through the process of weaving diverse strands, new relationships and meanings emerge.

We welcome submissions for oral presentations, panels/round tables, workshops, posters, performances, shared musicking, and other creative formats that reflect our conference theme and reflect the diversity of practice, participation, theory, and collaboration. We welcome your critical reflections; magical moments; and your journey with music therapy or related fields. Our audience will include members, registered music therapists, people with lived experience, allied health professionals, students, people involved in community groups or government agencies, and the wider public.

Please submit by Sunday 15 March 2026, 5pm, using [this Google Form](#):

<https://forms.gle/ba13QjwGcdpXhfKZ6>

(If you have any difficulty using the form, please email the Administrator for an alternative option.)

Presentation Formats:

- Oral presentations: 20 minutes plus 5 minutes questions (25 minutes total), followed by a five-minute changeover and time to move to the next session.
- Panel discussions and roundtables: 55 minutes (including short presentations, discussion, and audience questions) – for example, three speakers, each 10 minutes, and 25 minutes discussion.
- Workshops: 55 minutes, with an emphasis on active audience participation.
- Posters (size A0 or A1) will be displayed throughout the conference, with a scheduled opportunity for presenters to give a brief elevator pitch introducing their work.
- Performances of 15–30 minutes will be featured during the conference breaks
- Other format suggestions are welcome, if aligned with the conference theme.

Note, you may submit more than one presentation proposal; due to scheduling limitations, we may invite oral presentation proposals to be presented as a poster instead, and we reserve the right to limit oral presentations to one per presenter (after the anonymous review process).

Response to presenters: Your submission will be acknowledged, and the Selection Committee will aim to finalise the programme by 1 April. Advice will be sent out as soon as possible after this date.

Please spread the word among your personal and professional networks. The call is open to members, registered music therapists, allied professionals, students, and the general public. Any queries may be addressed to the Administrator: admin@musictherapy.org.nz.



Music Therapy Educators Gathering 2026

The ArtEZ Academy of Music in partnership with Aalborg University (Denmark) and Melbourne University (Australia) are hosting a unique Music Therapy Educators Gathering in 2026.

Music educators from around the world will meet in Enschede in the Netherlands on 16th and 17th April to explore the evolving landscape of our profession. The timing of this collaborative gathering is fortuitous for Music Therapy in New Zealand given current course developments at Victoria University of Wellington and the potential for the Master of Creative Arts to begin at the University of Auckland in 2027. It is likely that Victoria University of Wellington staff

will be represented at the event and will provide feedback for the wider music therapy community in due course

Findings from the 2024 Survey of Registered Music Therapists

The 2024 Survey aimed to obtain statistical information “to promote better understanding of music therapy in New Zealand, and to support registration, pay scales and other employment opportunities that would enhance work opportunities in NZ”. It was developed by Music Therapy New Zealand council representatives and administered by the New Zealand Music Therapy Registration Board. Applicants for registration gave permission for the deidentified statistical information to be shared with Music Therapy New Zealand. Dr Daphne Rickson completed the analysis and prepared this report 1.

There were 78 responses to the survey (approximately 87% of eligible participants). All respondents identified as Registered Music Therapists. One also identified as a counsellor, one as a Regional Centre Manager, a third as a lecturer, and another as a supervisor.

[Click this link to read more...](#)



IHC Library

**Did you know that Music Therapy New Zealand has a resource
Collection at the IHC Library?**

Our partners at the IHC library hold MThNZ's library collection, which includes e-books. Library access is free to anyone living in New Zealand. Books are requested [online](#) and mailed out countrywide along with a return courier bag.



The Library is open to anyone living in New Zealand over 18. They have information on all aspects of intellectual disability, autism and other developmental disabilities, with resources built up over many years.

You can join the Library by [registering online](#), registering in person, or by phoning us. You need to be over 18 to join. Contact us if you have forgotten your login details, please don't re-register.

IHC Library is open to visitors. Please make sure you carry a mask as requirements are constantly changing and you may need to wear one. You can visit the library on the [14th Floor, 57 Willis Street, Wellington](#).

Opening hours: 8:30am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, except for public holidays.

Get in touch: 0800 442 442 or email librarian@ihc.org.nz

Congratulations

Mauri Tui Tuia | Creative Therapies NZ

for this very well deserved recognition for their trauma-informed creative support for tamariki.

Congratulations to this year's winner: [Mauri Tui Tuia – Creative Therapies NZ](#)

From the Judges: “Mauri Tui Tuia exemplifies innovation and impact in the creative industries, bridging art, health, and education through trauma-informed, culturally grounded creative therapies. Serving diverse communities across Tai Tokerau and Tāmaki Makaurau, their work reaches tamariki, whānau, educators, and iwi partners creating measurable social and wellbeing outcomes. As Aotearoa’s only organisation uniting arts, music, and dance movement therapy, Mauri Tui Tuia is forging new pathways in an emerging market, demonstrating commercial sustainability while redefining how creativity drives community resilience and inclusion based right here in Tai Tokerau.”



Also, a massive well done to our finalist: Turner Centre Northland Business Excellence Awards powered by Northpower & Top Energy NZ and proudly presented by NZ Chambers of Commerce Northland. [#NBEA25](#) [#NorthlandBusinessAwards2025](#) [#NorthChamber](#)

The Sound of Us 2025 – Southern Music Therapy Annual Concert

In September, we, Southern Music Therapy (SMT), hosted our annual concert The Sound of Us 2025 at the Braintree Wellness Centre, with performances by our clients, for our clients, their families and support workers. This is more than just a concert; every year has and will continue to demonstrate how music can tell stories of resilience, connection, and growth. This year we had almost 100 people attend – record numbers!

Each year, our therapists choose one client or group they think would benefit from the opportunity to perform in the concert. We had 10 outstanding performances this year. Our clients' performances included a few groups sharing medley's while playing a variety of instruments; a couple of individuals shared covers of their favorite songs by Ed Sheeran, ABBA & Billy Joel, along with a few original compositions. Each individual performer has their own unique story, this includes those living with brain injuries, blindness, intellectual disabilities,

neurodegenerative conditions, mental health conditions, and in stroke rehabilitation, reflecting a cross-section of SMT clients.

The team couldn't miss out this year so we included an interactive item facilitated by our music therapy students, and a whole SMT team performance playing Country Roads on our own instruments including the flute, violin, trombone, bass guitar, clarinet & keys – you can imagine the vibe of the room by this point!

A highlight of the SMT concerts is always getting to celebrate our clients and experiencing the warmth and encouragement from our audience. If you are in Christchurch next September, keep an eye on our website & socials for the next concert – you won't be disappointed!

www.smt.nz/newsandevents

<https://www.facebook.com/southernmusictherapy/>



A Big Thank you

Alison Talmage

The CeleBRation Choir Christmas celebration marked the end of another year of singing and the completion (at last!) of my very long, part-time PhD at Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland School of Music and Centre for Brain Research (CBR).

I would like to record a special thank you to my supervisors, Associate Prof Te Oti Rakena, Prof Suzanne Purdy, and Adjunct Prof Daphne Rickson NZ RMTh, for their support, guidance, and patience. Special thanks too to all my participants, including members and volunteers from the CBR's CeleBRation Choir and the Kahikatea Music Therapy and Arts Trust's Sing Up Rodney community group; and several members of Music Therapy New Zealand and Aphasia Choirs Go Global. I am also very grateful to Jenny Gordon NZ RMTh for a wonderful job-share partnership.

Our honoured guests included the CeleBRation Choir's number one supporter, Distinguished Prof Sir Richard Faull, founder of the CBR. Sir Richard is a semi-finalist for New Zealander of the New Year and is semi-retiring to become an ambassador of the CBR. We were also delighted to meet the new CBR Director, Prof Hanneke Hulst, a neuroscientist from The Netherlands. We were also pleased to be joined by Linda Webb, MThNZ President, and many other supporters from the University.



*MThNZ President Linda Webb and Alison Talmage NZ RMTh
(Photo © Centre for Brain Research)*



*CeleBRation Choir
(Photo © Centre for Brain Research)*

How music therapy benefits men in prison

by Arts Access Aotearoa

"Music brings people together. It bridges cultural gaps, creates instant connection, and lights up the brain in ways we're only beginning to understand," says Chris O'Connor, a registered music therapist with more than 20 years of experience as a professional musician, composer and educator.

In recognition of his contribution, Chris received the Northern Region Arts in Corrections Educator of the Year Award 2025.



It was presented by Arts Access Aotearoa at an Arts in Corrections Network hui in Kohuora Auckland South Corrections Facility. Read more about [recipients of the Northern Region Arts Awards 2025](#).

After two decades of performing, recording, composing and teaching, Chris felt it was time to take a new direction. Drawn to music therapy and its power to foster healing – something he had personally experienced – he pursued a masters degree in the field. [Read more.....](#)



Registered Music Therapist (part-time), Southern Music Therapy

Closes: 20th January 2026

We are seeking a skilled music therapist to join our dynamic, supportive team.

The ideal candidate will have the following key skills & attributes:

- Strong facilitation skills and confidence in leading group sessions.
- Ability to work effectively in learning environments and adapt to diverse needs.
- Strong vocal abilities and confidence using guitar and/or piano in sessions.
- Experience working in specialist education settings.

About the position

- Schools and community environments: Supporting children in specialist education settings and inclusive learning groups.
- Clinic-based sessions: Working with adult clients, including those with long-term neurological or developmental needs, at both of our clinic spaces.
- Group and individual therapy: Facilitating sessions that promote communication, cognitive development, emotional expression, and social connection.
- Opportunities to lead large group music experiences, such as instrumental ensembles or choirs, fostering creativity and collaboration.

This role is based in Christchurch, New Zealand and will be part-time, minimum of 20 hours per week.

For more information please click the link to [SMT Job Listing](#)

Applications for this role should be sent to info@smt.nz by 20th January 2026

Acknowledgments

MusT is a publication of Music Therapy New Zealand.

Editor: Lisa Stanley (Administrator)

Contributors: Stephen Guerin, Linda Webb, Barbara Lewis

Music Therapy New Zealand is a registered charity in New Zealand. As a not-for-profit Music Therapy New Zealand relies on the generous support of donors and members to sustain its activities. A heartfelt thank you to the generous contributions of our friends,

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dta

EY
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Jeff Morrison
& Associates
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MusicHelps
ĀwhinaPuoro

FEATHER RIDGE
music therapy

mbs
ADVISORS

MCWILLIAM | BROWN | SKEDGWELL

Liminal
Pictures

**Australian
Music
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Association**

