



Media Release
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Two World Class scientists

Two Maurice Wilkins Centre scientists have been named Tall Poppies in the World Class New Zealand Awards.

Professor Garth Cooper has been recognised with the Biotechnology award, and Professor Margaret Brimble has been acknowledged with the Research, Science, Technology and Academic award.

The awards, sponsored by Kea New Zealand and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, recognise people who provide inspiration and leadership for the next generation of New Zealanders. Winners, selected across seven categories representing the diversity of the national economy, are acknowledged for the time, knowledge and skills they use to help New Zealand succeed internationally.

The awards will be presented at a dinner at the end of the month, when the Supreme Award winner also will be announced.

The Maurice Wilkins Centre, hosted by The University of Auckland, is one of eight Centres of Research Excellence funded by the New Zealand Government.

Professor Garth Cooper is one of New Zealand's foremost biological scientists and biotechnology entrepreneurs. He is currently Professor of Biochemistry and Clinical Biochemistry at The University of Auckland, where he leads a major research group that focuses on biomedical research. A particular emphasis of Cooper's research is type 2 diabetes –an area in which he is an internationally recognised expert. He is also a member of the Council of the Academy of the Royal Society of New Zealand and of the Endocrine Society.

Professor Margaret Brimble, a fellow of the Academy of the Royal Society of New Zealand, holds the Chair of Organic Chemistry at The University of Auckland and directs New Zealand's only medicinal chemistry programme. In partnership with Neuren Pharmaceuticals Limited, she led the medicinal chemistry team to develop the drug NNZ-2566 that has entered human clinical trials for traumatic brain injury in a collaboration with the US Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. She received the 2007 UNESCO-L'Oreal Women in Science Laureate in Materials Science for the Asia-Pacific region, an honour only given to the top 5 female scientists in the world.