



Hend Zaki, PhD

Dr Hend Zaki is experienced in issues of intersectionality, identity, and belonging. She has a PhD from the University of Auckland in Politics and International Relations. Her research focused on the identity of Muslims born/raised in New Zealand and Australia.

She has worked at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) since January 2017 in various roles in the refugee and migrant spaces as well as inclusion and diversity. She is passionate about working collaboratively to create more welcoming, inclusive and safe environments where everyone has a sense of belonging.

She is the Founder and Co-Chair of the upcoming Women of Colour in the Public Sector Network (WOCPSN). She was the Co-founder and previously served as the Co-Chair of the Women of Colour (WOC) Network in MBIE. In recognition of her role in establishing the network, she was awarded the Rising Star Award in 2022 by the Government Women's Network.

Dr Zaki has used findings from her PhD research and her experience working in the inclusion and diversity space to develop the "Rahma" programme to support leaders from all walks of life in creating more welcoming, inclusive and safe environments. Rahma is an Arabic word for compassion, and she believes that by being compassionate with oneself and others we contribute to creating social cohesion and a more inclusive Aotearoa. The Rahma programme will officially launch later this year.

Dr Zaki is originally from Egypt, she moved to New Zealand in 2015 with her husband and two daughters, Jayan and Saja.



Karli Te Aotonga

Karli has whakapapa connections to Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau, Te Arawa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Ruanui and Ngā Rauru.

Karli has leadership experience across the organisational strategic development and human resource management disciplines. She works at Te Tāhuhu o Te Mātauranga | The Ministry of Education as Manager, Māori-Crown Relations Capability, and lectures part-time for the School of Māori and Indigenous Studies at the University of Canterbury. She holds a Bachelor in Applied Management majoring in HR, a Masters in Māori and Indigenous Leadership and is a PhD candidate in Māori Studies - where her research is focused on tikanga Māori and the employment relationship in the Public Service.

Karli is committed to serving her whānau, hapū and iwi rights, interests and aspirations. Her most rewarding mahi and critical life mission is as māmā to her three boys Cobey, Wiremu Te Awarua and Tūterangi-Te Ramaapakura.



Claudia Faletolu - Ko wai au?

E tika ana te kōrero i ō tātou tīpuna, e kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai I Rangiātea
True are the words of our ancestors – I will never be lost for I am a seed of Rangiātea

Ko Te Ahuahu tōku maunga
Ko Waitangi tōku awa
Ko Ngatokimatawhaorua tōku waka
Ko Parawhenua tōku marae
Ko Ngāti Korohue rātou ko Te Uri Taniwha, Ko Ngāti Hineira, ko Ngāti Hine ōku hapū
Ko Ngāpuhi tōku iwi

At the core of who I am, are my tūpuna, my ancestors and my cultural identity in being a fierce Wahine Māori. I acknowledge and breathe life into my purpose and my quest which is to serve my people - Tangata Whenua, Tangata Tiriti and everyone in between. The most important mātāpono that drives me is whakawhanaungatanga – the process of establishing and building relationships.

I focus on helping organisations to build authentic inclusive environments where it is safe for people to engage with Te Ao Māori, break down barriers and fears so they see the true value in weaving together our combined cultural superpowers. Cultural transformation is the future of all organisations, unleashing and empowering all people of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

As an L&D/OD and Māori Strategy professional for over 16 years I am driven by strong thought leadership and I'm in the business of adding value at a strategic and tangible level. My mission is to connect and translate strategic Te Ao Māori plans and organisational direction to people so that they understand how and why they do what they do. Building strong relationships, providing trusted advice, and coaching is also a part of how I do things. I am passionate, motivated, and inspired to co-create learning, culture, and leadership, as well as calling out potential: everything I do is for the greater good of the whole.



Helen Karati

Helen is a living testimony of her parents, family, and village. A descendant of Tui Manu'a, she hails from Saleaamua, Aleipata, and Lelepa, Savaii in Samoa.

With 20 years in the public service, she is a strategic leader focused on improving outcomes for New Zealanders, particularly women and girls.

Helen started her public service career at the Ministry of Social Development, undertaking several regional and national leadership roles. Notably, she spearheaded Pacific Prosperity, MSD's inaugural national Pacific strategy in 2019, and introduced the talanoa methodology, fostering open dialogue with over 5,000 Pacific families and communities and conducting an extensive survey in eight Pacific languages.

Currently, Helen is the Technical Lead for the Equal Pay Taskforce at Te Kawa Mataaho, Public Service Commission, driving efforts to close pay gaps for Māori, Pacific, and ethnic public servants. She co-chairs the Pacific Public Servants Network and holds a Master of Public Management from Victoria University



Mridula Duffadar

Mridula is a versatile professional with a diverse skill set spanning project management, community empowerment, and personal development coaching. With over eight years of combined experience in leadership roles, Mridula excels in driving initiatives forward and fostering environments where individuals can thrive. From spearheading the successful delivery of diverse projects to guiding transformative journeys of growth for women and individuals seeking personal development, Mridula brings a compassionate and empowering approach to everything she does.

In her role as a Senior Delivery Project Manager at Eke Panuku Development Auckland, Mridula collaborates closely with senior management teams to drive vision and strategy for diverse construction projects. Leading multidisciplinary teams, she ensures seamless ideation to execution flow, rigorous financial oversight, and successful project delivery within budget and timeline constraints.

Simultaneously, as a Group Coach and Facilitator at the Inner City Women's Group, Mridula specializes in personal development, anger management, and identity reclamation for young mothers and the wider community. Designing and delivering tailored coaching programs, she facilitates group sessions and workshops, and leads intensive training modules focused on self-awareness and communication techniques. As an Accredited Life Coach, Mridula positions herself as a pivotal guide, closely partnering with clients to shape their visions and strategies for personal growth. Her coaching approach is rooted in the ABC framework, positive psychology, non-violent communication, and time-honored wisdom. She fosters a seamless flow from introspection to actionable outcomes, nurturing an environment of mutual respect and optimal performance.

Mridula envisions a world where everyone feels unrestrained in their abilities, ventures forth without fear, and is deeply anchored in self-belief and joy. Her aspiration is to contribute to a world radiating elevated compassion, where individuals embrace their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.