

Dodd-Walls Partner, Otago Museum, Wins Museum Aotearoa Awards

The commitment of the Dodd-Walls Centre for Photonic and Quantum Technologies (DWC) to science education and outreach was recognised at a national level last night at the annual Museums Aotearoa Awards. Since its inception in 2015, the Dodd-Walls Centre has partnered with the Otago Museum to lead its science education and outreach activities. Otago Museum received two joint awards for projects that intimately involved and embedded Dodd-Walls Centre personnel and expertise.

The first of these was for, *Exhibition Excellence – Taonga Māori* (where it was a joint winner alongside MTG Hawke's Bay's *He Manu Tioriori 100 Years of Ngāti Kahungunu Music* exhibition), for its new *Tūhura Otago Community Trust Science Centre*. The Dodd-Walls Centre worked closely with the Otago Museum team to identify and develop the interactives and interpretation within Tūhura. It also continues to work with the Museum's team of Science Communicators to take science explorations and demonstrations directly to Māori students and communities with Science Wānanga throughout Aotearoa. Professor David Hutchinson, Director of the Dodd-Walls Centre, comments, "Tūhura has been a fantastic development. Not only does it make science accessible and fun for kids and families, but it does so in a uniquely Aotearoa fashion, blending the dual cultures and narratives of Kāi Tahu and what is often termed "western" science. Alongside initiatives like Science Wānanga we're hoping to inspire the next generation of Māori students to embrace science in



Dodd-Walls Centre plays a key role in Tūhura

any and all careers they may choose."

Otago Museum was also awarded, *Most Innovative Public Programme* (jointly with Taupo Museum's *Dog Show and Gallery for Dogs*) for its science engagement programme *Extreme Science - Taking Science to the Chathams*. This programme was developed and delivered in partnership with the Dodd-Walls Centre, with a team of science communicators, postgraduates and researchers taking exciting science demonstrations to every school on Chatham and Pitt Island, as well as delivering professional development sessions to their teachers and hosting evening talks and astronomy sessions for the wider community. Prof Hutchison notes "We could see the difference we made to the kids and communities. They had a huge appetite to learn about



Dodd-Walls Centre and Otago Museum entertain and educate with a science show at the Moriori Kopinga Marae on Chatham Island

engage a part of New Zealand that would otherwise rarely have the chance to experience the magic of science. We'd love to see the students carry on their enthusiasm for science when they head to the mainland for their high-schooling, as who knows where our next Rutherford, Dodd, Walls or Callaghan might come from...why shouldn't they be from the Chathams?"

science, but despite the best efforts of their teachers, they have little chance to be exposed to practicing scientists, especially physicists, and postgrads. This programme enabled us to