

Nomination Statement for Distinguished New Zealand Geographer:

Nominee: Professor Wendy Larner, Victoria University

Nominator: Auckland Branch of NZGS

Professor Wendy Larner is arguably the preeminent New Zealand academic geographer of her generation. She has won recognition from peers and national institutional and disciplinary bodies domestically and internationally across all domains of academic work. Wendy's scholarship, institutional work, and mentorship of a generation of domestic and international geographers have made her one of the most widely recognised international geographers of recent years. A successful and widely celebrated international scholar, she has been appointed to New Zealand's most senior academic leadership roles. As a scholar and educator, she is distinguished domestically and internationally and a 'go-to' global authority in her sub-disciplinary field. As a tireless leader of the discipline, much of her work has been carried out internationally and/or beyond the narrow confines of discipline itself. Across all domains of her work, Professor Larner has been a vocal champion and supporter of New Zealand Geography and has exerted a major influence for progressive change (within and beyond the discipline). Her career and her influence is grounded firmly in New Zealand Geography.

As a Geography educator, Professor Larner has supervised multiple students, including several prominent geographers in New Zealand and internationally. She has led innovative transdisciplinary postgraduate and early career residential research symposia domestically and internationally and has been a prominent participant in a number of Geography summer schools for postgraduate researchers. These initiatives have vitalised the discipline and built bridges into the Academy for participants. Professor Larner has also led international initiatives in the internationalisation of education and was made a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

As a scholar, Professor Larner has made a major domestic and international contribution. Her scholarship crosses internal disciplinary boundaries between feminist, political, economic, and social geographies. She is one of a handful of international geographers who have led disciplinary developments in Human Geography over the last fifteen years. She is a leading international authority on the governmental transformations wrought by neoliberalism and the gendered social formations that it has produced. Wendy's work on the interplay of new state forms, political strategies, and governmental under neoliberalism is a cornerstone in the field and widely cited in Geography and beyond. It has been recognised in her receipt of numerous research awards and grants. Wendy has published in all the major journals in her field. Her rare talent for theorising away from empirical research, commitment to enactive forms of research, and commitments to progressive institutional and knowledge production projects have seen her deliver well over 100 invited addresses over the last twenty years.

Professor Larner has worked as an academic in multiple domestic universities. Whenever possible, she has been an active and committed member of multiple branches of the NZGS, including being permanently on call for invited lectures, support for initiatives, and mentorship support for early career staff and postgrads. Wendy was, and is, a prominent member of the Waikato feminist school of geography and led the Auckland school of post-structuralist political economy, both internationally recognised clusters of geographical research. As Director of Human Geography at the University of Bristol, she led a generational change in one of the world's most influential Departments of Geography. Wendy has served on the editorial boards of eleven international

journals, including the NZ Geographer. She was editor of the leading critical journal *Antipode* and led the development of its Foundation for Social Justice and its international Summer School. In this role she was able to support a keynote speaker (a leading global scholar of indigenous geographies) at the 2018 NZGS/IAG and arrange for high profile global scholars to attend that conference. She has served as conference chair for RGS_IBG and as a trustee for the Royal Geographical Society (UK).

Beyond the discipline, Professor Larner went on at the University of Bristol to serve as Research Director and Dean of the School of Social Science). She has served as a trustee for Fulbright NZ and a Panel member on the UK REF and New Zealand's PBRF. She returned to New Zealand to take up the role of Provost at Victoria University in 2017. Over the last three years Professor Larner has been President of the Royal Society of New Zealand, Te Apārangi (2017-2021), one of only two women to hold that position in 150 years. Serving jointly as Provost of Victoria and President of Te Apārangi has made Wendy New Zealand's most senior academic geographer. In both these roles, she has sought to enhance equity and diversity, promote Māori researchers and Mātauranga Māori, and support early and mid-career researchers. Drawing heavily on her disciplinary background to drive change, she has made significant progressive change.

Across what has been a stellar career as an academic geographer, Wendy's work has been marked by four key themes that make her an ideal candidate for the award of Distinguished New Zealand Geographer. The first is outstanding, internationally recognised geographical scholarship and practice. Her CV is like that of no other New Zealand geographer. The second has been her support for early career researchers and postgraduate students and women in Geography. More than a mentor, she is a down to earth, approachable, and institutionally savvy supporter of colleagues. The third has been the insistence on building a career from and for New Zealand Geography. Her academic work uses New Zealand examples, not just unapologetically but to insist on their value in their own terms as well as cases for understanding the wider world. Her commitment to New Zealand's geographies is registered in her love of its environments and her determination to return to New Zealand from the UK to work. Finally, this commitment is also registered in the progressive political projects that have enlivened her work as a social, political and economic geographer and underscored and given purpose to her institutional work. From feminist critique of call centres, to local governance partnerships in West Auckland, and indigenising Te Apārangi she has worked with multiple others to enact change. Wendy exemplifies the committed fearlessness that distinguishes an academic prepared to move beyond the comforts of discipline and critique to lead change in complex and contradictory institutional and political worlds.