

GRANTS AWARDED AUGUST 2025

A total of 31 grants were awarded at the Heart Foundation's Scientific Committee meeting in July. The awards include 2 Senior Fellowships, 2 Research Fellowships, 3 Postgraduate Scholarships, 10 Project Grants, 5 Small Project Grants and 4 Grant-in-Aid.

5 Summer Studentships were awarded to the Medical Schools at the University of Auckland and the University of Otago.

FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Dr Charlotte Greer

Heart Foundation Senior Fellowship (3 years)
Department of Medicine at the University of Otago

Dr Nikki Earle

Heart Foundation Senior Fellowship (3 years)
Department of Medicine at the University of
Auckland

Dr Louise Paton

Heart Foundation Research Fellowship (3 years)
Department of Medicine at the University of Otago

Dr Shu Meng

Heart Foundation Research Fellowship (3 years)
Auckland Bioengineering Institute at the University of Auckland

Miss Janny Lau

Heart Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship (1 year and 4 months)
Department of Medicine at the University of Otago

Ms Rebekah Crosswell

Heart Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship (3 years)
Health Sciences Research at the University of Waikato

PROJECT GRANTS

Dr Andree Pearson

University of Otago
Hauora Manawa mō ngā Kaumātua me ngā Whānau | Heart health in older Māori and families
\$249,390 over 2 years

Associate Professor Anna Pilbrow

Department of Medicine at the University of Otago
Who is really at risk? Developing an epigenetic biomarker to predict incident CVD in heart-healthy populations
\$249,962 over 2 years

Mrs Caroline Alsweiler

Green Lane Coordinating Centre

A global collaborative, multi-centre randomised clinical trial: The Antiplatelet Therapy in Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection (APT-SCAD) Trial

\$245,500 over 3 years

Dr Catherine Tsai

Molecular Medicine and Pathology at the University of Auckland

Engineered probiotic bacteria as a mucosal vaccine against rheumatic heart disease

\$245,627 over 2 years

Associate Professor Jichao Zhao

Auckland Bioengineering Institute at the University of Auckland

Optimising atrial fibrillation treatment: advancing patient stratification with cardiac CT

\$249,982 over 3 years

Ms Jingyuan Liang

Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Auckland

Contemporary lipid profiles and lipid management in all adult New Zealanders

\$102,513 over 1 year and 6 months

Dr Jocelyne Benatar

Te Whatu Ora Te Toka Tumai Auckland

The STUNNED heart study – Randomised open label study evaluating effects of medication in patients with possible heart muscle stunning after a heart attack

\$246,768 over 3 years and 5 months

Dr June-Chiew Han

Auckland Bioengineering Institute at the University of Auckland

Right-heart failure: decoding disease mechanisms and optimising treatment strategies from an energetics perspective.

\$95,843 over 3 years

Dr Louise Paton

Department of Medicine at the University of Otago

Lac-Phe as a metabolic biomarker and modulator of heart failure

\$129,096 over 3 years

Dr Sarah Appleby

Department of Medicine at the University of Otago

Exploring the gut-heart axis in post-MI heart failure progression

\$250,000 over 2 years

SMALL PROJECT GRANTS AND GRANT-IN-AID

Dr Anna Rolleston

Manawaora Integrated Health & Research

The impact of binaural sounds on heart rate variability

\$19,985 over 1 year

Dr Debbie Zhao

Auckland Bioengineering Institute at the University of Auckland

Advancing diastolic function assessment in atrial fibrillation with artificial intelligence

Auckland Bioengineering Institute at the University of Auckland

\$15,773 over 4 months

Dr Debina Sarkar

The University of Otago

Impact of TP53 mutations on lipid dysregulation in atherosclerosis

\$20,000 over 1 year and 4 months

Dr James Hewett

Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Canterbury

Total artificial heart development for Heart Hackathon competition

\$20,000 over 1 year

Dr Kenneth Tran

Auckland Bioengineering Institute at the University of Auckland

Disease mechanisms in congenital heart disease

\$20,000 over 3 years

Mr Stian Thomson

Department of Physiology at the University of Auckland

Enhancing HFpEF research through advanced neuroscience training

\$7,740 over 4 months

Dr Teena Gamage

University of Auckland

Small particles, big potential: extracellular vesicles as early biomarkers of congenital heart disease

\$20,000 over 2 years

Mrs Tracy Klap

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand, Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley

The production and implementation of a national audio-visual resource for patients preparing for admission to Intensive Care after cardiac surgery (the 'Kia Rite' project)

\$16,187 over 4 months

Mr Ulima Tofi

The Centre for Health Ltd

Re-connecting with the moana – relationship building and community connection to explore the experience of Māori & Pacific heart health workers and their whānau in Aotearoa

\$20,000 over 6 months