

## 2025 Waka Ama New Zealand Elected Board Member Nominee Information

### Tui Pukepuke (McCaull) nominated by Te Puku o Te Ika

#### Nominee Profile:

Tui Pukepuke (Te Whakatōhea, Ngāi Tūhoe) is a world champion paddler, kaupapa Māori researcher, and staunch advocate for wāhine in waka ama. With over 10 years of paddling experience, she has represented Aotearoa at both national and international levels, achieving multiple national and world Elite and Club titles across both sprint and long-distance disciplines.

Tui maintains a strong connection to her identity as an uri of Te Whakatōhea and Ngāi Tūhoe, and is an active presence at her marae. She contributes to the governance of her whānau's Māori land trusts and hapū spaces, which has deepened her understanding of intergenerational responsibility, whenua-based leadership, and the practical application of tikanga Māori in decision-making.

She is currently Kaihautū Oranga for Ngā Kura ā Iwi o Aotearoa, where she leads national hauora and oranga strategy across a network of 50 kura Māori. Her work includes financial oversight, strategic planning, and policy development that centres tamariki and whānau wellbeing.

Tui is also the co-founder and director of Āwai Waka Wāhine, a kaupapa born from the need to create more space for wāhine in waka ama. In 2024, Āwai has delivered three wānanga and workshops for wāhine in Ōpōtiki, Whakatāne, and Rotorua designed to foster connection, confidence, and cultural strength on and off the water.

She holds a Master's degree in Indigenous Studies, a Bachelor of Physical Education, and is currently completing her PhD at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. Her doctoral research explores the question: "How does participation in waka ama influence the hauora and oranga of wāhine Māori in contemporary Aotearoa?"

Tui brings a unique combination of elite paddling experience, tikanga Māori governance, and strategic capability. She is committed to the future of waka ama as a taonga tuku iho and ensuring its continued growth, integrity, and inclusivity for generations to come.

#### Reason for Nomination: (completed by Member Club / Region)

He poho kereru ana matau ki te whakaingoa a Tui ki te turanga ki runga i te poari o WANZ. Tui brings a powerful blend of elite paddling experience, Kaupapa Māori Leadership and governance capability. With over a decade of national and international representation and a strong record of service across iwi and education. She is deeply grounded in tikanga Māori and committed to upholding the values of manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, hauora and tu-tangata. Her work with Āwai Waka Wāhine and her strategic leadership in Māori Education reflect her dedication to inclusive, future-focused development. We are confident that Tui will be a strong, values-led voice at the Board table and a tireless advocate for our waka ama whanau.

**Nominee statement: Why you wish to be a Board member of Nga Kaihoe o Aotearoa (Waka Ama New Zealand)?**

From the time that I first picked up the paddle, Waka ama has always been more than a sport for me. Its been a way of life, a space for healing, expression and connection. It has shaped who I am and continues to teach me what it means to show up for others and to be a part of something bigger than yourself.

Putting my name forward for the Waka Ama NZ Board is about having the opportunity to give back to the kaupapa that has given me so much. I care deeply about our waka ama whānau, and want to ensure that our future generations have all this and more. I want to be part of the team that supports the growth, protection, and future of this taonga tuku iho.

I have been fortunate to paddle at all levels, from local clubs to world championships, and I’ve seen firsthand the magic of what waka ama can do for individuals and communities. But I’ve also seen the challenges and I believe the Board plays a critical role in navigating those waters with integrity and vision.

I bring with me governance experience, strategic thinking, and a deep commitment to Te Ao Māori, more than that, I bring my passion for this sport, and the knowledge that I’ve gained through my professional and personal experiences at governance, management, and grass roots levels. I’m here to listen, to represent, and to work hard on behalf of the people who make this kaupapa what it is.

If I can contribute in a way that strengthens our waka ama hāpori now and for the generations to come then I would be honoured to take up that seat at the table, not for myself, but for all of us.

**Please identify below the key skills from the Board Skills Matrix (below) which you believe you will bring to the role, and provide evidence of those skills in the space below:**

Whole of Board Skills Matrix (for reference)

Leadership	Financial literacy and analytical ability	Outcomes focused
Marketing & Communications	Inter-personal communication skills	Ethical, open, honest, trustworthy, high levels of integrity
Ability to understand and relate to stakeholders	Ability to work as a team player	Business acumen
The Sport of Waka Ama knowledge	Strong local and national community connection, credibility and networks	Ability to establish quality relationships
A knowledge of Tikanga Māori, Te Reo Māori and the Values of Waka Ama NZ	Knowledge and application of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in governance	Commitment to diversity and inclusion
Strategic Thinking	Knowledge of legal issues relating to business or the not for profit sector	Good understanding of the principles of Governance and Management

Tikanga Māori, Te Reo Māori, and the Values of Waka Ama

As an uri of Te Whakatōhea and Ngāi Tūhoe, I was raised with a strong grounding in tikanga Māori and I have a strong command of Te Reo Māori and use it confidently in my mahi, at the marae, and in everyday life. I am a kanohi kitea at my marae and serve as a trustee on our whānau whenua trust, and in our Hapū committee. My mahi and my paddling are guided by the Waka Ama NZ values of manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, hauora, and tū tangata. I uphold these both on the water and in the boardroom. Through Āwai Waka Wāhine, I bring these values to life in practical, community-based ways.

#### Financial Literacy, Accounting and Analytical Ability

In my role as Kaihautū Oranga at Ngā Kura ā Iwi, I provide strategic leadership and financial oversight of Oranga development across a national network of 50 kura. I work closely with financial reports, budgets, and investment decisions to ensure kaupapa-aligned outcomes. I have led national projects with multiple funding sources and reporting requirements and am confident in navigating both kaupapa Māori frameworks and mainstream accountability structures.

#### Ethical, Honest, and Trustworthy with High Integrity

I have held governance roles across iwi, health, and education sectors, and am known for my straight-up, transparent, and principled approach. Whether on a marae, at the board table, or in the waka, I hold myself accountable to the people I serve. My kaupapa is about lifting others, particularly wāhine, and my track record reflects a commitment to doing the right thing, even when it's not the easy thing.

#### Governance and Management Principles

I regularly support boards in both health and education to understand and implement sound governance processes. This includes developing strategic plans, managing risk, and ensuring clear lines between governance and operations. I bring lived experience as a board advisor, strategist, and leader as well as grassroots understanding from having served as a club secretary, coach, and manager. I know the challenges our clubs, volunteers and paddlers face and can bring that into conversations at the national level.

#### **Please identify how you would apply the Values of Waka Ama New Zealand at a governance level:**

##### Manaakitanga:

At a governance level, manaakitanga means creating safe, respectful spaces where all voices are heard, from paddlers and parents to volunteers and regional reps. I would support processes that are transparent, inclusive, and values-based, ensuring decisions are made with care and fairness. Manaakitanga is also about holding space for difficult kōrero when needed and ensuring people leave feeling heard and valued.

##### Whanaungatanga:

At governance level, whanaungatanga means building strong, trusting relationships across our waka ama whānau, especially with our Regional Boards. I believe it's important we understand each region's unique strengths and challenges, so we can support them to design local solutions that reflect their mana motuhake. For me, this looks like regular engagement, open communication, and creating space for regions to shape national strategy.

##### Hauora

Waka ama provides a direct pathway to hauora. At Board level, this means ensuring our strategies and policies actively support the wellbeing of our paddlers physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I would advocate for safe, inclusive environments, and initiatives that uplift and empower our wider waka ama whānau.

#### Tū Tangata

Tū Tangata at governance level means acting with integrity, standing strong in our values, and holding ourselves accountable to the kaupapa. It's making decisions that are fair, equitable and future-focussed.