

MEDIA RELEASE

Oticon Foundation in New Zealand
Thursday 26 September 2013

FOUNDATION GRANTS SUPPORT PROJECTS PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMMUNICATION TO HELP IMPROVE LIVES OF HEARING IMPAIRED

Sign Language teachers and interpreters, hearing-impaired children, cognitively impaired athletes and people dealing with hearing impaired customers will all benefit from financial help for projects to improve the lives of the hearing impaired.

The Oticon Foundation has backed New Zealand projects with financial grants of over \$250,000 in 2013.

This year the Foundation is supporting the National Foundation for the Deaf in its human rights advocacy programme as well as University of Auckland research led by Professor Suzanne Purdy, Head of Speech Science, into the way hearing impaired children interpret word stress and intonation. The study's findings will help inform decisions about speech therapy needs for children with hearing loss.

The Foundation is also funding the development of digital resources in New Zealand Sign Language including a grammar ebook. Karen Pullar, secretary to the Foundation, says the ebooks will fill a gap in resources for both second language learners and their teachers.

An information poster that gives businesses and organisations tips on how to communicate with a customer, client or student who has a hearing loss has been developed thanks to the Hearing Association and the Oticon Foundation. "The Hearing Association estimates that one in six customers are hearing impaired. The aim of this simple initiative is to encourage and promote the best communication practice with frontline staff."

Other 2013 projects backed include:

- **The Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre at the University of Auckland**
- Support for Healthy Hearing to attend the Special Olympics NZ National Summer games to provide athletes with hearing screening services
- Travel for local researchers to present their research at international conferences
- Key note speakers fees for hearing care professional's conferences
- An annual prize for audiology at the University of Auckland.
- Equipment to record seminars for a trans-Tasman education and training collaboration initiative

Grant recipients' stories can be read in the Foundation's e-newsletter [here](#). Applications for 2014 grants can be made [here](#).

The Oticon Foundation in New Zealand was established in October 1976. It is the charitable trust of Oticon New Zealand Limited and aims to improve the lives of the hearing impaired in New Zealand through communication and knowledge. It is committed to finding better solutions to hearing loss and strives to increase public awareness and understanding of hearing impairment.

Ends

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the oticon foundation