



Kia ora and welcome to our July newsletter.

This month we've got an exciting announcement about a research project and we're recruiting participants for a new clinical drug trial in Parkinson's disease. We'll share with you the results from our recent fundraising event, Music Meets Art, and remember, NZBRI is a registered charity that relies solely on donations, research grants and fundraising. If you've got an idea to help us fundraise for brain research in Canterbury, please contact us at [info@nzbri.org](mailto:info@nzbri.org)

## **Did you know Canterbury has the highest rates of Parkinson's in New Zealand?**

Earlier this year, the NZBRI epidemiology team discovered that South Canterbury, Canterbury and the West Coast have the three highest rates of Parkinson's in the country. Fortunately, the team have just been awarded a substantial grant from the Health Research Council to determine risk factors for Parkinson's disease in New Zealand. This includes occupational exposures, wider environmental exposures, lifestyle factors and genetic factors.



Over the next three years lead investigator, Dr Toni Pitcher, and her team will study 1000 participants across the country. This is such important research and is the first of its kind in New Zealand.

Congratulations to Toni and the team! We can't wait to share the results of this research.

## New Clinical Trial

We are looking for 30 Parkinson's participants for a 12-weeks drug trial run by Professor Tim Anderson at the New Zealand Brain Research Institute. The aim of the trial is to check whether one particular medication may improve cognition by increasing blood flow to the brain.

The study consists of nine clinic visits at the New Zealand Brain Research Institute (66 Stewart Street). Each visit involves blood and urine collection, neurological examination, ECGs and blood pressure check, questionnaires about mood and daily life as well as several tests of thinking and memory. Participants will wear a heart rate and activity monitor for seven consecutive days between visits and keep a medication diary. Participants will be reimbursed for petrol cost and time (\$300 per visit).

We are looking for two groups of Parkinson's participants.

1. Parkinson's participants between the ages of 40-80 years old with:
  - Sleep disturbances
  - Low mood from time to time
  
2. Parkinson's participants between the ages of 50-80 years old with:
  - Marked memory and thinking problems that affect your everyday life
  - A spouse, child or person who knows them well to join them on clinic visits and provide information about their activities of daily living.

Please contact Dr Kyla-Louise Horne to register your interest and hear more about the study. [kyla.horne@nzbri.org](mailto:kyla.horne@nzbri.org) 03 595 6800

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## Raising funds for brain research in Canterbury

What amazing support at our annual Music Meets Art event. Over 200 guests listened to a fabulous selection of opera, jazz, contemporary and modern music. Along with our live auction we raised **\$37,000**, a record for this event!

Thank you so much to our sponsors Lizzie's Cuisine, Pegasus Bay Winery, Ash and Shar Sutherland Todd from Harcourts Gold, and Southern Eye Specialists.

We were so impressed with the venue, The Piano on Armagh St, that we've already booked it again for next year. We're looking forward to seeing you there again on Saturday 14 May, 2022.

Raising funds for neurological research in Canterbury

**MUSIC MEETS ART**

Friends of the  
New Zealand  
Brain Research  
Institute

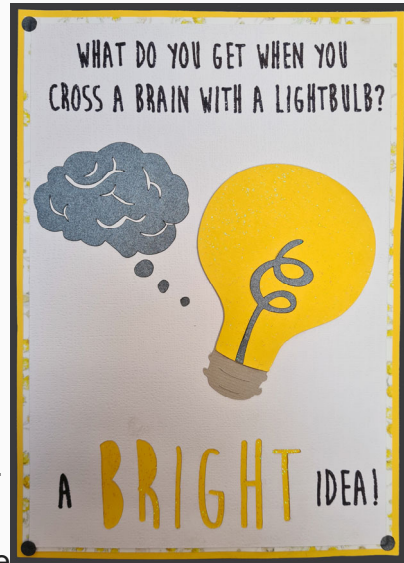
**Saturday 14 May 2022, "THE PIANO", 156 Armagh St Christchurch**  
*This is a must-see event for lovers of fine wine, art and music!*



## Mentoring Future Problem Solvers

Over the last four months NZBRI researchers have mentored a talented group of young students. Qualifying for the international finals of Future Problem Solving last year, this team of year 8 and 9 students from St Andrews College learnt a lot about Neurotechnology.

Future Problem Solving is an international competition challenging high school students to solve global problems through innovative solutions. The topic for the 2021 international finals was Neurotechnology; it was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the possibilities future research into the brain can provide.



Researchers Professor Richard Jones, Dr Reza Shoorangiz, Dr Tracy Melzer, Dr Kyla Horne and Dr Deborah Mason spent many hours with the keen students in the lead up to the event.

**Congratulations to the St Andrews team who placed 5th internationally for their written component and 4th for their presentation.** We're so proud to be a part of their journey and hope that we have encouraged the next generation of neuroscientists!

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The New Zealand Brain Research Institute was initially founded by a generous donation from local businessman, Cas Van der Veer. The Institute receives no direct government funding and relies on the continued generous support from the community through donations and fundraising events.

[Donate Now](#)

For more information about our work or how to support us, contact us at:

Website: [www.nzbri.org](http://www.nzbri.org)

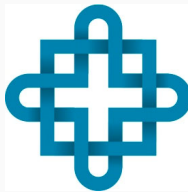
Or email: [info@nzbri.org](mailto:info@nzbri.org)

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Stay safe

Ngā mihi

The New Zealand Brain Research Institute Team



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