

Mele Wendt is Samoan (Malie, Lefaga, Vaiala) and palagi (NZ, Britain) and grew up in Samoa and Fiji and lived in Wellington, New Zealand, for over 30 years. She has spent 24 years in the education sector, first, as a secondary school teacher, then as the founding Pacific Liaison Officer at Victoria University of Wellington, and for 10 years as Executive Director of Fulbright New Zealand in Wellington. Over the past 5 years Mele has been doing governance and consultancies in various areas including scholarships, Pacific peoples' development, governance and organizational capacity building. She is a certified member of the Institute of Directors and serves on the boards of Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu (NZ Correspondence School) and the Wellington Community Trust. She also chairs the Steering Group which developed and recently launched the National Action Plan for Community Governance and will oversee its implementation. Recent governance appointments include being the Chair of Massey University's Pacific Student Success Working Group, and chair of the Pasifika Education Centre in Auckland. In January 2019, Mele was awarded a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for her services to governance, the Pacific community and women.