**Friday 14 March**

**For Immediate Release**

**$100m foundation to support NZ environment and education**

A $100 million philanthropic foundation, established to support and invest in high impact New Zealand-based environmental and education projects, was launched in Auckland today.

The NEXT Foundation is funded through the benefaction of New Zealanders Annette and Neal Plowman, who have already supported a number of significant philanthropic projects, including the Rotoroa Island Trust in the Hauraki Gulf, Project Janzsoon in the Abel Tasman National Park and Teach First NZ which aims to tackle educational inequality.

The Foundation will make commitments of approximately $5 - $15 million in up to three projects each year. Any individual or group with a high impact, well-structured idea in the areas of education or environment will be able to submit an Expression of Interest for funding consideration.

The Foundation has an Advisory Panel of notable New Zealanders who will help with project selection and a Board of Directors chaired by Chris Liddell.

Mr Liddell , also Chairman of Xero, and previously Vice Chairman of General Motors and CFO of Microsoft Corporation, says education and the environment have been chosen as the two categories for support and investment because they have the greatest potential to inspire and create lasting value for New Zealanders.

“We have a vision of creating a legacy of environmental and educational excellence for the benefit of future generations of New Zealanders,” he says.

“To achieve this vision we will make significant commitments to projects that are aspirational, ambitious and high impact. The Foundation will be a strategic investor in well-managed projects that deliver a meaningful and measurable return toward the education of New Zealanders and the protection of our unique landscape, flora and fauna.

“We admire the foresight of our benefactors” said Mr Liddell “and believe their generosity will have a profound impact on the future of our country”

www.nextfoundation.org.nz

**ENDS**

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