

EDUCATION MEDIA RELEASE

NEW TEACHING AWARDS TO BOOST CLASSROOM INNOVATION

New Zealand school teachers are constantly seeking fresh approaches to classroom challenges. Now, thanks to an exciting new funding initiative, they'll have the chance to develop and implement their most groundbreaking ideas. Not only that, but they'll get to share them with schools all over the country.

Launched this month by education not-for-profit the Education Hub, and generously funded by NEXT Foundation, the Bright Spots Awards are each worth up to \$75,000 over two year and will enable teachers and schools to design, implement and iteratively develop an innovative project. Funding can be used for teacher release time, specialist support, and resource costs, and successful applicants will also receive ongoing one-on-one support from industry experts.

The awards are the brainchild of former secondary school teacher, academic, and Education Hub founder, Dr Nina Hood, who says the initiative offers an exciting opportunity for teachers to develop their ideas and lead the way in innovative classroom practice.

"Our teachers are constantly coming up with new ways to respond to their students' needs, but they often struggle to find the time or resources to implement or to rigorously evaluate the impact of these new practices," she says.

"The Bright Spots Awards are an opportunity to create, trial and iteratively develop, and evaluate an innovative practice and then to share or scale it up across other schools. This sharing of practice will bring big benefits to New Zealand schools, teachers – and ultimately our students."

Those interested have until June 1 to submit their applications and the Education Hub will be running in person and online support sessions throughout May to help teachers complete their submissions. Four awards are up for grabs and successful recipients will attend workshops in October and January to help hone their projects, ready to begin implementation at the start of the 2019 school year. The first year of the two-year programme is earmarked for innovation development and evaluation, while in 2020 successful projects will be rolled out to other schools.

NEXT's support for the Bright Spots Awards follows on from their funding of The Education Hub and a number of other transformational educational initiatives. NEXT CEO Bill Kermode said "The Bright Spots Awards are another opportunity for us to support examples of excellence in practice in New Zealand education. We are delighted to be able to partner with The Education Hub in them."

For further information about the Bright Spots Awards and application details visit www.theeducationhub.org.nz/brightspots

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About the Education Hub

www.theeducationhub.org.nz

The Education Hub is an education not-for-profit that seeks to foster innovation and improvement in education and drive better opportunities for students by bringing together people, resources and ideas.

About the NEXT Foundation

<http://www.nextfoundation.org.nz/>

The NEXT Foundation is a privately funded New Zealand philanthropic foundation that invests in environmental and educational projects that will benefit New Zealanders.