



# NUFFIELD

NEW ZEALAND  
FARMING SCHOLARSHIPS

A PROGRAMME BY  
RURAL LEADERS

## 2026 Nuffield New Zealand Farming Scholarships

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Leaders by example  
since 1950



### RURAL LEADERS

GROWING WORLD-CLASS  
LEADERS FOR OUR COUNTRY





The Nuffield New Zealand Farming Scholarship is a life-changing experience that accelerates leadership development, unlocks individual potential, and broadens horizons through study and experience.



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Applications close  
Sunday, 17 August, 2025

## Creating insight, foresight and leaders at the global forefront of food and fibre

New Zealand is a small place at the end of the world. Yet, it is among the world leaders in food and fibre production. This is a position that can only be held with a healthy dose of both attitude and aptitude.

Our food and fibre producers stay competitive even with our logistical disadvantages, high land values and without the subsidies available to farmers elsewhere in the world. Despite our achievements, there is always a new path ahead. We need to ensure we are well equipped for the journey.

The Nuffield Farming Scholarship is one of the most valuable and prestigious awards in New Zealand's Food and Fibre Sector. Nuffield Scholars are part of a global agri-food network that promotes global vision, leadership and innovation.

“

*You'll meet people and resolve questions that you didn't even know you had. For anybody who really wants to stretch their understanding of an issue beyond what's possible within the capacity of your own networks, this will totally do that.*

*Nuffield opens the door to the global network of people who know people and know research and supply chains, and literally anything you could possibly want to know.*

Kerry Worsnop, 2023 Scholar





# The Nuffield network — spanning decades, and continents

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Lord Nuffield, industrialist and philanthropist, initiated a travelling scholarship for British and Empire farmers. The reason was two-fold – to recognise their contribution to feeding the nation through the war and advancing best practice in agriculture globally.

The first two scholars were selected in 1947. Since then the Nuffield Farming Scholarship has created a global network of over 1,700 agriculturalists, who are at the leading edge of their profession.

New Zealand joined the Nuffield network in 1950, together with Australia and Canada. The programmes are funded by voluntary contributions from their own investor partners, local corporates and primary sector organisations.

The Nuffield global network provides scholars with access to international leaders in the agri-food sector, and the best production, management and marketing systems around the globe. New Zealand scholars have been hosted by institutions, organisations and businesses – from the White House to a Girl's Agricultural School in Kenya. It is a unique learning experience.



## Member countries

- Australia
- Brazil
- Canada
- France
- Ireland
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- United Kingdom
- Zimbabwe
- Kenya

## Associate countries

- Chile
- Japan
- South Africa
- United States
- Germany
- Poland

# The scholarship taking you around the globe

The Programme offers an incredible opportunity that benefits careers, industry and business by advancing personal leadership development. Nuffield Scholars provide leadership in off-farm and on-farm innovations across New Zealand and the world.

The chosen scholars embark on a unique national and global learning experience with opportunities for collaboration, networking and mentoring, to fast track thinking and grow their leadership skills to the next level.

The Programme allows scholars to spend time away from their work to travel, observe, immerse, reflect, and learn about global agricultural practices and their operating contexts. Scholars gain new insights and ideas to bring back to New Zealand to share, implement and influence positively, decisions that affect the Food and Fibre Sector and our rural communities.





2026's core components begin with scholarships awarded in Wellington, 5 November 2025, followed by domestic component, the Value Chain Innovation Programme. International components CSC and GFP follow. The Programme ends with a scholar-driven itinerary to complete individual research.

Below is an indication of how the scholarship might look for the 2026 cohort.

Please refer to our website for the most up to date information.

## 2026 core components

### Value Chain Innovation Programme

Mid to late February 2026

Nuffield Scholars undertake a one-week immersion into leadership, critical thinking and New Zealand value chains.

The Value Chain Innovation Programme is designed to deliver deeper understanding of leadership, gain knowledge into value chain innovation strategies, challenge critical thinking and lay the path for the next components of the Scholarship.

It allows scholars to further develop their research area of interest. It plugs them into leading New Zealanders and exposes them to the key challenges and opportunities facing New Zealand's Food and Fibre Sector.

Scholars work together to publish an industry insights report based on their observations.

### Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC)

March, 2026

The CSC brings together the global Nuffield year group. In 2026 it is to be hosted in Japan.

It is a week-long international conference where scholars hear presentations from thought leaders on global agricultural challenges, attend panel discussions and complete a number of field trips to cement their learning.

### Global Focus Programme (GFP)

Beginning in April, 2026

The GFP is a four-week tour undertaken with a group of 8-10 Nuffield Scholars from different countries. Each small group travels to as many as six countries and four continents.

Designed for impact, this component has an intensive itinerary of visits, meetings and experiences that lead to transformational personal insight and growth.

Facilitated by locals in each host country, GFP's are an unparalleled opportunity to learn about the unique cultural, political, environmental, and business nuances in each country.

They are the foundation of life-long friendships and a global network based on trust and shared experiences.

### Individual Research Report

February, 2026

An individual research programme that includes 7-9 weeks of personal field research. Scholars have the freedom to choose their own field of study and design a programme that best facilitates the development of insight and foresight in their chosen topic.

Each scholar produces an individual research report, which contributes to Nuffield New Zealand's purpose of keeping our country at the global forefront of food and fibre systems.

Final reports are due February 2027.

Post programme, the scholars present their findings at conferences and industry events.



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# THE NUFFIELD JOURNEY

## AWARDS FUNCTION

Early November

### Wellington

Successful candidates attend an Awards Function at Parliament. It will be hosted by the Minister for Primary Industries, and is followed by programme orientation sessions. Partners invited.

## VALUE CHAIN INNOVATION TOUR

February 2026

### New Zealand

A one-week immersion tour of New Zealand's leading food and fibre businesses. Gives a deeper understanding of leadership and value chain innovation strategies. Prepares you for the next parts of the scholarship.

## PREPARATION WEEK

Late January

### Christchurch

Briefing and preparation workshop with industry leaders to give you the current state of play in NZ's Food and Fibre Sector.

Core drivers, presentation skills, and critical thinking work.

Planning your topic, literature review and topic selection.

## CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS CONFERENCE

Early March

### Osaka, Japan

Eight-day global conference, attended by up to 80 other international Nuffield Scholars, covering leadership and global agricultural themes with panel discussions and field trips.

## GLOBAL FOCUS PROGRAMME

March - October

Six-week tour undertaken with 8-10 other Nuffield Scholars that covers five to countries and to four continents, looking at social, cultural, political and agricultural contexts, practices, strengths and challenges.

## INDIVIDUAL STUDY AND TRAVEL

Own schedule

8-10 weeks of individual travel and research in an area of personal interest. It can be undertaken anywhere in the world (if it is safe to do so).

Participants have access to international leaders in agriculture and food industries.

## FINAL RESEARCH REPORT

March 2027

Final report submitted.

## FINAL WORKSHOP/ POST SCHOLARSHIP

April

Review/evaluation of core components, personal leadership plan, industry support networks. Develop plans for industry presentations/thought leadership forums.

### Ongoing

Scholars encouraged to participate in industry conversations on area of research, including: industry events and engaging in public debate on sector challenges.





For more information, or to schedule a confidential discussion about your application, or eligibility, contact Dr Lyndsey Dance at [Lyndseydance@ruralleaders.co.nz](mailto:Lyndseydance@ruralleaders.co.nz)

# Who is Nuffield for?

This programme is for motivated people across the Food and Fibre Sector who:

- have a desire to share, explore, bring to life ideas they believe in
- strive to challenge and test their thinking
- are not afraid to do things differently
- understand the importance of giving back to their communities and industries
- lead by doing and learn by trying
- think global, lead local
- have a strong sense of purpose
- are open to new opportunities.

We welcome those committed to developing the people around them, and those who want to lead conversations in the Food and Fibre Sector.

# Eligibility

To be considered you must:

- be actively engaged in farming, growing, food production or agri-business and/or have a connection to farming/growing through family, work, land or business
- be committed to continuous leadership in the Food and Fibre Sector and/or rural community
- exhibit an innovative and/or entrepreneurial spirit
- have a solid knowledge and understanding of the New Zealand Food and Fibre Sector
- be a New Zealand citizen or hold New Zealand permanent residency status.

*“The Nuffield Scholarship is a special programme with a great history and run by great people. Looking back over my scholarship year, to say the experience has been immensely rewarding seems like an understatement. I can’t speak highly enough of my Nuffield experience.*

*Throughout my time as a scholar there were countless inspiring interactions - developing my knowledge and understanding of our agriculture sector, its opportunities, and its challenges.*

*The scholarship stretches you as a person - it gave me the chance to meet with innovators and industry leaders, to participate in discussions with them and then develop critical thinking through group work and through individual reports.*

John Foley, 2021 Scholar





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## 2026 selection process

“

*I was privileged to receive a Nuffield and looked forward to the positive disruption it would bring to my life through international experiences. Then a global pandemic hit.*

*It would have been easy to mourn the loss of what might've been, but in truth this was a chance to learn to adapt quickly, turn challenge into opportunity, and grow as a person. To this end, with the passionate, dedicated team at Rural Leaders, I was able to be part of helping shape the future of the New Zealand Scholarship with the creation of the 'Global Tour of NZ'.*

*If you're considering applying for a Scholarship, you should know that at times it will be challenging, daunting, and even frustrating. You will have to push yourself, but the rewards for doing so will be life changing. It has been for me.*

Ben McLauchlan, 2020 Scholar

1.

Applicants are contacted personally by phone for an initial discussion on their motivation for applying for a Nuffield New Zealand Farming Scholarship.

**Last week of August, 2025**

2.

All applicants who meet the criteria are considered, in confidence, and shortlisted by the Nuffield New Zealand Selection Panel (Trustees and a Strategic Investing Partner Representative).

**Mid September, 2025**

3.

Face to face interviews will be conducted in early October, 2025 in Christchurch. Candidates will be advised of their success within three days of the interview.

### Scholarship Awards

Successful candidates will attend the Nuffield New Zealand Awards Function and orientation sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday, 4-5 November, 2025 in Wellington.

4.

(Partners invited).



### How many scholarships are awarded each year?

Up to five scholarships annually.

### How much is the Nuffield New Zealand Farming Scholarship worth?

The total value of the scholarship is NZ\$50,000. The change reflects increases in costs, e.g., travel.

### Are the awarded funds enough to cover the expected cost?

The scholarship funding provided should be sufficient to meet the core components of the programme, depending on time away and number of return trips made.

However, most scholars will invest/seek extra funding as required in order to maximise this opportunity.

### Do I need to organise my own travel?

The Value Chain Innovation Programme, the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC) and the Global Focus Programme (GFP) are organised for you. All other travel is organised by you to fit your goals and research topic.

### What happens if the Pandemic disrupts travel?

Over the last three years we have had to adapt to just that challenge. Thankfully, the world has opened up and many of our current scholars have recently been overseas to meet their research needs. It is important to note that travel is a required part of the scholarship.

Beyond the Value Chain Programme, CSC and GFP, it is the responsibility of the individual scholar to organise and plan their own travel.

### Who provides funding for Nuffield Scholarships?

Rural Leaders' funding comes from our investing partners who have strong interest in leadership development for the benefit of the Food and Fibre Sector and wider New Zealand economy.

Our current strategic investing partners are: DairyNZ, AGMARDT, FMG, and the Mackenzie Charitable Foundation.

Programme partners are: Beef+Lamb New Zealand Ltd, Ministry for Primary Industries, FAR, Farmlands, Horticulture New Zealand, Zespri, LIC, and Rabobank.

### Is there a specific area that I have to study?

While scholars have the freedom to pursue a topic of personal interest, there is an expectation that the topic will contribute to the development of New Zealand's Food and Fibre Sector.

### Where in the world can I carry out my scholarship study?

Nuffield Scholars can use the scholarship funds to visit any organisation or country to research their topic, meet and interview key people or observe first-hand the practices relevant to their study.

### What kind of assistance can I expect from Nuffield International?

A significant network of Nuffield contacts are available in member and associate countries, but scholars are also encouraged to travel outside these countries and establish contacts of their own.

Global Nuffield alumni usually offer to host scholars and are a source of valuable contacts. Previous scholars are a great source of information for potential contacts in particular areas of study or countries you might like to visit.

### What additional support is provided for the completion of the reports?

Support is provided throughout the year. Post scholarship support is given through industry briefings, allocated mentors, specialist advice and research support. We do this to ensure our scholars, Nuffield New Zealand and respective primary industry organisations get the most from this unique opportunity.

### What are you looking for in a Nuffield Scholar?

We're looking for doers. People who get out and try to make a difference – whether that's through their team or themselves. We also like to see strong evidence of motivation, courage, innovation, perceptiveness and of giving back to community or industry.

### Am I eligible to apply if I work in the agriculture services sector, but do not farm myself?

A small number of scholars have been selected from the wider Food and Fibre Sector.

Agri-professionals are still expected to be closely connected to food and fibre production through family, work, land or business ownership. If you're unsure about your eligibility, just get in contact with us at Rural Leaders.

Q&A





Register your interest today at  
[ruralleaders.co.nz/nuffield](http://ruralleaders.co.nz/nuffield)

# Nuffield Scholars — making change happen

The Nuffield Farming Scholarship helps build leaders for the modern economy and the future of food and fibre production. It is a programme for those who are engaged, motivated and committed to innovating to solve old and emerging challenges.

The Nuffield experience helps scholars gain new insights and ideas to bring back to New Zealand, to influence the decisions that affect the agri-food sector and our rural communities. This high-stakes programme is for individuals who have the following attributes:

**Bold.** The will to step forward, to challenge conventional thinking, to act, to make decisions with confidence.

**Innovative.** Someone who can develop and express original thinking and ideas.

**Motivated.** Driven to go above and beyond to accomplish a goal. Someone who can find the energy and confidence needed to do so.

**Perceptive.** Possesses the cognitive, observational, and critical thinking abilities to assess challenges and generate usable insights.

**Community-minded.** Motivated to contribute to community by collaborating and sharing skills, knowledge, experience, and ideas, forging ever-stronger connections with people and place.

Nuffield alumni  
are leading in  
these widely  
recognised

- Ministry for Primary Industries
- Horticulture NZ
- Fonterra
- Beef + Lamb New Zealand
- Farmlands
- LIC
- Ravensdown
- Ballance Agri-Nutrients
- Dairy New Zealand
- Zespri
- Synlait Milk
- Callaghan Institute
- FAR
- Air New Zealand
- Rabobank
- AMI Insurance
- OSPRI
- NZ Merino
- Wools of New Zealand
- Global Farmer Network
- AgResearch
- MyFarm

Register your interest today at  
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If you have any queries, contact

Dr Lyndsey Dance at [Lyndseydance@ruralleaders.co.nz](mailto:Lyndseydance@ruralleaders.co.nz)



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*I'd describe Nuffield as being this event that is positively disruptive. When you're living it, you are not sure what it means. It tips your world upside down and you feel very uncomfortable about your place in the world.*

*But as you work your way through that, and you get the opportunity to reflect on it, you see it as this hugely positive experience.*

*For me now, that positivity comes from the people you meet, the family of other scholars that wrap around you. A network open to you picking up the phone or flicking them an email. And they're immediately interested in connecting with you on any range of issues or challenges. It's been one of the most amazing things that has happened.*

*Sometimes we can fall into the trap where we think we do our Nuffield Scholarship and then that's that - the end.*

*But actually, I would view completing the Nuffield as just the start of the journey. It's then asking what next? It's ensuring we apply what we've learned, and how we give that back to the primary sector. That's the really exciting piece.*



## Kate Scott

### 2018 Nuffielder

There's a fairly straight line between Kate's study and what she does now. Kate's Nuffield research was on enabling better environmental outcomes in agriculture. It unpacked how farmers might ensure they continued to have profitable businesses, while delivering better outcomes for the environment too.

Her business 'Landpro' is based in Cromwell, Otago, and continues to help farmers make the most of their land. The business has grown dramatically in recent years, driven in part by the scale and pace of regulatory changes, but also for the way in which Kate and her team enable farmers to plan for change. It has a lot to do with her positive leadership style too.



Kate Scott



Julian Raine



Desiree Reid



Hamish Murray





*Nuffield for me was all about the personal experience, honing my leadership skills in order to try to lead producers through changes. It was also about developing my ability to think holistically.*

*You gain more thinking capacity, looking at a problem not just from a single view but to be able to walk around the issue and see a number of points of view.*

*Without Nuffield I wouldn't have got to where I got to where I am today. It gave me a critical thinking ability and resilience as well. Calling on the experiences and interactions I had, have been invaluable.*



Kate Scott



Julian Raine



Desiree Reid



Hamish Murray



## Julian Raine

### 1997 Nuffielder

Julian runs a diverse Dairy and Horticulture operation in the Nelson region.

The horticultural production operation includes: kiwifruit, apples, feijoas and boysenberries. Examples of innovation here include having a third of his apple orchards 'robot-ready' in anticipation of robots being onsite, picking apples in the future.

Innovation also features heavily in his dairy operations. In a 'back to the future' approach, Julian sells milk locally, in glass, directly to the consumer's front door.

Julian's Nuffield research looked at integrated fruit production and included identifying a system 'green grow' to deliver three elements: fruit without residues, a food safety system, and indicators that show the environment hasn't been harmed producing that fruit. Ten years later the industry adopted much of 'green grow'.





*Nuffield was a life-changing experience for me. I thought I would only learn about my research topic, but the lessons learned on the road were all encompassing. From time in Europe, North and South America, China, and Southeast Asia, I will continue to draw upon the scholarship experience for a long time yet.*

*Many years on and Nuffield hasn't finished. I don't think it ever will. The Nuffield Network continues to open doors and introduce exciting new ideas, both through new travels and hosting scholars from around the world.*



Kate Scott



Julian Raine



Desiree Reid



Hamish Murray



## Desiree Reid

### 2010 Nuffielder

Desiree was formerly well entrenched in the dairy industry. She was not only a dairy farmer but was also on the Fonterra Shareholder's Council. It was during her time with Fonterra that Desiree was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship in 2010.

Since then Desiree has changed industries and now produces award winning whiskey, vodka, gin and liqueurs, out of her business, Cardrona Distillery.

Cardrona Distillery exports to many countries including the UK. Desiree believes in building teams capable of achieving extraordinary things and at Cardrona, her team is doing just that.





*My Nuffield Scholarship helped me focus on productive, efficient, effective teams. I studied what made businesses successful and what made workplaces great.*

*I spent time in Silicon Valley, the Netherlands and then closer to home with the Crusaders – unpacking how they were able to win repeatedly over time. I couldn't recommend Nuffield enough.*

*One of the greatest challenges I faced doing Nuffield was setting things up for my team to be able to step up while I was away with the Scholarship.*

*What ended up happening was that they thrived with their new responsibility and we've never gone back to how we were before that. The growth that our business and the people in it, have gone through, including myself, has been the biggest take out for me.*



## Hamish Murray

### 2019 Nuffielder

Along with his team and family, Hamish runs Bluff Station near Kekerengu, Marlborough. A high country sheep and beef station stretching into the Clarence Valley from near the coast. It's a large patch of land that also makes use of the plentiful Manuka on the property with up to 800 hives.

Hamish studied Economics at Cambridge University and was destined for work outside of agriculture. Then, sitting on a train on the way to a job interview in London, he realised that was not what he wanted to do. He wanted to farm.

After a hard drought and the earthquakes that rocked the Marlborough region, Hamish did his Nuffield Scholarship. His study looked at what makes a productive, efficient, effective team. He looked at businesses around the world that were held up on those pillars, and what adopting their approaches might mean for the future of work in New Zealand.



Kate Scott



Julian Raine



Desiree Reid



Hamish Murray





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Global vision,  
leadership and  
innovation

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