



# The Manalagi Project

Newsletter - September 2021

Warmest of Pacific greetings from the Manalagi Project team.

We hope this email finds you and your loved ones well. A lot has happened since we launched and the country has been tested by COVID-19 yet again. We genuinely hope you and your loved ones are well and have all that you need to thrive in these difficult times.

It is scarcely believable for us to acknowledge now that we launched just ten months ago! Since then, the Manalagi team have been working hard to ensure the project continues to build momentum. We have received a great deal of support from our communities that we hope to build on as we head into the next phase of the project.

We are delighted to be able to provide an update for you here.

## Community Consultations

In April, our community consultations were held across 11 sessions. Travelling across both motu, we spoke to many Pacific Rainbow+ community members and allies about the draft survey design. This was a momentous occasion for us, as we were able to consult with our communities directly around what made sense for the project to collect data on and what the potential gaps were that we would be leaving open for future research by our community.

We want to reiterate our gratitude to everyone who came along to our community consultations in Ōtepoti-Dunedin, Ōtautahi-Christchurch, Tokoroa, Whangarei, Turanganui-a-kiwa Gisborne, Whangai-a-tara Wellington, Kirikiriroa-Hamilton and Tāmaki Makaurau-Auckland. It was an incredible honour to talanoa with you all, sharing stories, ideas, and kai. These community consultations have guided our reshaping of the survey, and we are currently awaiting final approval of our survey instrument from the Health and Disability Ethics Committee (HDEC).



An important takeaway for us from our community consultation talanoa was that each community in Aotearoa has unique and specific needs that speak to the diversity of our Pacific Rainbow LGBTQIA+ MVPFAFF+ communities' experiences. It also means that Manalagi is just one, of what we hope will be many, projects that will help to further unpack the history, treatment, and perceptions of Pacific Rainbow LGBTQIA+ MVPFAFF+ peoples across New Zealand. Another important takeaway from these sessions was that many of our allies are important to many Pacific Rainbow+ peoples, so our team have designed a shadow set of questions that will allow our allies to also take the survey. Furthermore, we see this as an important way for those who are questioning and may not wish to claim a specific identity within our Rainbow+ whānau at this time, to engage in the work of the Manalagi Project.

### ***Manalagi Repository***

Another exciting event for us has been the launching and development of our Manalagi Repository. The Manalagi Repository is an open access resource, filled with everything from academic articles, videos, blogs and opinion pieces that centre Pacific Rainbow LGBTQIA+ MVPFAFF+ peoples in New Zealand and the diaspora more broadly conceived. Our Repository was officially launched in March of this year and has continued to grow and expand ever since.

If you have any resources that you think would be a great addition, please contact our Research Assistant Allyssa Verner-Pula on [allyssa.verner-pula@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:allyssa.verner-pula@auckland.ac.nz) who will find a home in the repository for your work/resource. The goal of the repository is to encourage more Pacific Rainbow LGBTQIA+ MVPFAFF+ peoples to undertake further research for and by our communities, as well as to highlight the wealth of resources our community members have already produced.

### ***Journal Articles from the Manalagi team***

We are also excited to share that the Manalagi Project team have officially published two academic papers that can be viewed in the Repository! Published in the most recent issue of the Pacific Health Dialog, Principal Investigator Seuta'afili Dr Patrick Thomsen and Co-Investigator Phylesha Brown-Acton, engage in a talanoa that stories the genealogy of the Manalagi Project, which you can find here. In the same issue, you can also find a scoping literature review written by Seuta'afili Dr Patrick Thomsen, Sarah McLean-Osborn, our Summer Scholar 2020/21 Hollyanna Ainea and our Research Assistant Allyssa Verner-Pula, making the case for an intersectionally-informed approach to health research for Pacific Rainbow+ communities in New Zealand. You can find that paper here.

### ***Manalagi Project in the News***

Since our funding by the Health Research Council of New Zealand, we have been extremely blessed to have received much news coverage on the work of the project. Here are a list of news items that featured the Manalagi Project, and we have more publicity scheduled once the survey goes live!

Mana at heart of Pacific Rainbow health project

We're part of New Zealand's Pacific story

New health project for New Zealand's diverse Pacific Rainbow community

New project looks at the challenges for Aotearoa's Pasifika Rainbow communities

### ***What's to come...***

Our survey is almost ready, and following Ethics approval by HDEC, we will be testing the survey to ensure that we have the right timings and supports in the instrument. If you are interested in being a survey tester, please let our research assistant Allyssa know by replying to this email. We hope to have a wide range of possible testers from all corners of our communities to help us make sure we have the best possible instrument available to go live at the end of January 2022.

### ***Manalagi Project Plan Tentative Programme***

October – December 2021: Survey Testing  
January 2022: Final survey adjustment period following testing  
February 2022: Survey Launch During Auckland Pride Month  
June 2022: Survey Closing During World Pride Month

There will be a further exciting development announced next week, so please stay updated with us on our various platforms: our website, our Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, as we publish regular updates and relevant content on these platforms.

We are so grateful for your support and encouragement of the Manalagi Project so far and we look forward to continuing to share this journey with you in the months ahead.

If you have any specific questions you would like to ask the research team, please get in touch with our Research Assistant Allyssa Verner-Pula on [allyssa.verner-pula@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:allyssa.verner-pula@auckland.ac.nz). Our Principal Investigator, Seuta'afili Dr Patrick Thomsen, can also be reached on [patrick.thomsen@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:patrick.thomsen@auckland.ac.nz).

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The Manalagi Project Team

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