

2024 YEARBOOK

2024 年度报告



CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE AT
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
惠灵顿维多利亚大学孔子学院

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE AT VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

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FROM THE CHAIR 寄语

2024 has been a year of transition and a continuation of our rebuild. After welcoming back Mandarin Language Assistants (MLAs) and a Chinese teacher last year, this year we continued to restore our programmes and revitalise relationships with our partners and schools. The Institute also welcomed an innovative new operational team, who are dedicated to supporting the Institute's growth and success.

Despite the challenges of recent years, the Confucius Institute at Victoria University of Wellington continues to deliver programmes of quality and relevance for the University and New Zealand. Our flagship MLA programme, promoting Chinese language learning in New Zealand schools, continues to be the largest in New Zealand and Australasia. Our cultural programmes have reached more than 10,000 people, and we have collaborated with numerous local organisations, schools, and community groups to foster cross-cultural understanding and strengthen ties between New Zealand and China.

At a national level, schools and universities are facing various challenges in offering Chinese language, with language programme funding changes and restructures, government mandates shifting educational priorities, and growing competition within the curriculum.

As we continue our rebuild, the Institute remains committed to helping schools in the region to sustain and grow their programmes and support students to learn Mandarin and understand China's culture and society. Given China's global influence and its economic significance to New Zealand, it is essential to equip New Zealanders with the skills to critically engage with China and its people.

The Institute would not be able to operate without the support it receives from the University and its partner, Xiamen University. Together we look forward to promoting Chinese language and culture and to strengthening cooperation between our two universities.

Roger Shew

Chair, Confucius Institute Advisory Board

OUR MISSION 使命

The mission of the Confucius Institute at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington is to help build New Zealanders’ China capability, through a better understanding of the country and its people, language, and culture.

For nearly 14 years, we have expanded opportunities for New Zealanders to learn Chinese through our Mandarin Language Assistant programme in schools, our language courses, and our courses tailored for professionals, and we have provided training and support to broaden the overall Chinese skills and China knowledge base in New Zealand.

By bringing Chinese music, literature, and visual arts to New Zealand and organising collaborative exchanges between the two countries’ creative sectors, we continue to increase knowledge of the traditions and culture of historical and contemporary China.

Victoria University of Wellington’s strategy of building strong engagement with China includes hosting the Confucius Institute. The Institute contributes to the University’s China studies and academic links, especially those with its Confucius Institute partner Xiamen University, located in Wellington’s sister city of Xiamen.

OUR HISTORY 渊源

Victoria University of Wellington launched the Institute during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping (then Vice-President) in June 2010 as a partnership between Victoria University of Wellington and Xiamen University, and it started operating in March 2011. The two universities updated their Agreement and renewed this partnership in September 2020.

The establishment of the Confucius Institute is an important bridge across the span of cultural, educational, and academic relations between New Zealand and China. Wellington’s is one of three Confucius Institutes in New Zealand, part of the worldwide network of more than 480 Confucius Institutes.



Chinese President Xi Jinping (then Vice President) launching the VUW Confucius Institute in June 2010.

OUR PEOPLE 人员

Our Confucius Institute is staffed by Victoria University of Wellington and Xiamen University. There have been changes of personnel at the Institute this year. Early in the year we farewelled the deputy director of seven years, Yezhu Zhao, and our administrator, Summer Jiang. In February, we welcomed the new deputy director, Wen Chen, together with two Mandarin Language Assistants (MLAs), Jing Wang and Huang Lingchu, to work part time in our office as interns. In April, the Institute appointed its new director, Fiona Mann, and in September, our new project coordinator, Nicole Bernas. Our Chinese teacher, Wenqian Chen, was joined by a second teacher, Zhixiang Zhou, in December. In December, we farewelled our chair, Roger Shew, who resigned from his role at the University. Roger has provided valuable support and guidance to the Confucius Institute over the last year. At the start of 2024, the Institute placed 24 MLAs over 51 schools across our region, which extends from Wellington to the Bay of Plenty.



The Confucius Institute team.

The Advisory Board met twice in 2024, in September and December. It was chaired by Roger Shew, Director International of Victoria University of Wellington. It was co-chaired by Xiamen University’s Dean of Chinese International Education College, Chen Zhiwei. Victoria University of Wellington’s Professor Sarah Leggott stood down from the Board. We warmly welcomed back former Advisory Board member Tony Browne and welcomed new Board member Professor Bing Xue. Dr Luo Hui of VUW’s Chinese programme has returned as our arts adviser and Board member. We thank all current and former Board members for their service and expert guidance.

OUR PARTNERS 我们的合作伙伴



Xiamen University, Siming Campus.

The Institute’s key partnership with Xiamen University continues to grow. In September, Xiamen University vice-president Professor Deng Zhaohui visited the Confucius Institute and met with our chair and Board members. In October, the Institute’s director and deputy director visited Xiamen University for the first time since COVID-19 and met in person with our counterparts at the Chinese International Education College and other colleges to discuss deepening cooperation and exchange between the two universities.

In December 2024, senior consultants from the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC) and Chinese International Education Foundation (CIEF) met with the worldwide network of Confucius Institutes at the World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing. Opportunities were taken here to exchange views with other Xiamen University partner Confucius Institutes and to meet with Xiamen University vice-president Professor Shi Dalin.

A highlight of the conference was to be present when Tony Browne, former Confucius Institute chair and current Board member, was awarded the Brilliance of CI Award for his contribution to strengthening New Zealand–China relations and dedication to advancing the development of Confucius Institutes. In September, senior consultants of the CLEC visited VUW to commemorate 20 years of the Mandarin Language Assistant programme.

The Institute's primary collaboration is with the schools and organisations that teach and promote Chinese. This year we also worked with the Confucius Institutes of the University of Auckland and University of Canterbury, New Zealand Chinese Language Teachers Association, Tui Tuia | Learning Circle, New Zealand Association of Language Teachers, and New Zealand Chinese Language Week Trust.

On cultural programmes, the Confucius Institute works with the Wellington City Council, Asia Events Trust, Wellington Chinese Community Groups Trust, Treasury, Mary Potter Hospice, Whanganui District Council, Porirua Multicultural Council, Ministry of Health, Kapiti Coast District Library, Kapiti Latin Communities, New Zealand China Friendship Society, China Culture Centre in Wellington, and Embassy of the People's Republic of China.

We value our relationships with a wide range of organisations and media, including the Ministry of Education, Wellington Xiamen Association, Xiamen University Alumni Association, Home Voice, and Xinhua News Agency.

Within Victoria University of Wellington, the Institute is part of Wellington University International. This year, we maintained our collaboration with the New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī, the School of Languages and Cultures, the Chinese programme, and international teams, including International Student Experience, Wellington International Leadership Programme, International Marketing, and International Partnerships. We also sponsor the Vic Uni DBC dragon boat team.

OUR REGION 区域

The Institute promotes Chinese language and culture across a large region from Wellington to the Bay of Plenty, covering schools and communities in Wellington City, the Hutt Valley, Kapiti Coast, Wairarapa, Whanganui, New Plymouth, Rotorua, Tauranga, Kawerau and Whakatane.



CI Director Fiona Mann with Xiamen University Vice-President Deng Zhaohui in Wellington.



Tony Browne receiving the Brilliance of CI Award at the World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing.



CI Director Fiona Mann and Deputy Director Wen Chen at the Chinese International Education College at Xiamen University.



Xiamen University worldwide Confucius Institutes meeting at the World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing with Xiamen University Vice President Prof. Shi Dalin.

OUR RESOURCES 资源

Our Confucius Institute is grateful for the support of Victoria University of Wellington and Xiamen University. VUW provides premises, administrative support, staff, facilities, and equipment. Xiamen University provides staff and the project budget as well as external management of the Mandarin Language Assistant programme. We also welcome the support of the Center for Language Education and Cooperation and the Chinese International Education Foundation.



CLEC delegation with local MLAs, school principals and the Confucius Institute team.



CI Director Fiona Mann and Discover China guzheng performer Jia Ling with Whanganui Mayor Andrew Tripe at Lanterns on the Awa.

OUR YEAR 本年度

This year the Institute's focus was on rebuilding relationships with partner schools and key stakeholders, as well as managing a successful Mandarin Language Assistant (MLA) programme. We also farewelled old team members and welcomed a near completely new team.

For the first time since COVID-19, the Institute's directors visited nearly all partner schools and interviewed prospective MLAs in person in Xiamen. They also attended the World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing.

Nationally, Chinese language enrolments at secondary schools lifted in 2024 to 5,415, which shows a steady increase over the last two years after the large drop in 2022. Chinese has the fourth largest foreign language learner group. This is an encouraging development which may continue as the MLA programme gains momentum again and travel to China opens even more with visa-free access for New Zealanders. In the Wellington region, the outlook is mixed. We have seen a few schools stop offering Chinese, while others are looking to increase their participation in the MLA programme because interest or enrolments have increased. Nationally at the tertiary level (2023), Chinese language learners continue to drop. This is exacerbated by the drop in funding for language programmes at universities.

PROMOTING CHINESE LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

在中小学与社区推广中文

MANDARIN LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

The Institute's Mandarin Language Assistants (MLAs) are the most important vehicle for our support of Chinese language teaching in schools. An MLA is a high-performing Chinese university graduate who spends a year in New Zealand schools as an on-site Chinese teaching resource. The MLA programme has been an outstanding success and was a key factor in the growth of students' learning Chinese in New Zealand primary and secondary schools.

In 2024 the Institute deployed 24 MLAs to more than 50 schools across 12 cities and towns in the lower half of the North Island, including 11 high schools and 40 primary and intermediate schools. We estimate that these 24 MLAs taught over 25,000 school students. Our 2024 cohort was carefully selected from Xiamen University.

While the MLA numbers are lower than pre-COVID-19 years, the Institute's programme remains the largest in Australasia. We acknowledge the strong commitment from all our partner schools—principals and teachers—and our Chinese partners for funding, pedagogical guidance, and pastoral care which contributes to the success of the MLA programme.



MLA Wang Siyao in class teaching plum blossom ink blowing.

BRINGING CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TO REGIONAL NEW ZEALAND

智者乐水, 仁者乐山

Part of the special character of the Victoria University MLA programme is our focus on bringing Chinese language and culture to remote areas of regional New Zealand, which would otherwise struggle to offer this subject as part of the curriculum. A significant parallel development has been the Institute's growing engagement with Māori, in particular working through schools that have a dominant Māori identity or strong Māori connections. This also reflects our commitment to nurturing and equipping the next generation of New Zealanders to be successful global citizens.



Newly arrived MLAs with the Confucius Institute team and Chinese Embassy Education Counsellor Dong Zhixue.

CONFUCIUS CLASSROOMS 下属孔子课堂

There are nine Confucius Classrooms in our region which can receive additional resources to support well-developed Chinese language programmes. There are more than 700 Confucius Classrooms globally, with 26 in New Zealand. Many act as a hub, providing support to surrounding schools, like Whanganui High School and Western Heights High School in Rotorua.

Whanganui High School, established 2013.

Confucius Classroom is a Chinese culture and language hub for Whanganui schools and the wider community. Each year, they organise and participate in several activities, most notably the Whanganui Lanterns on the Awa, which attracts thousands of people. In 2024, highlights also included kung fu classes, Chinese language week, winning the Chinese Bridge competition, and a new dragon boating festival.



Whanganui High School dragon boating.



Whanganui High School Confucius Classroom students attending kung fu class.

Samuel Marsden Collegiate, Wellington, established 2015.

Samuel Marsden Collegiate Confucius Classroom highlights in 2024 included learning how to make Chinese tea in a formal setting, celebrating the mid-autumn festival by making mooncakes, Chinese food cooking classes, and learning how to play the zither.



Samuel Marsden Collegiate Confucius Classroom students making mooncakes.



Samuel Marsden Collegiate Confucius Classroom student preparing a traditional tea ceremony.

Tauranga Intermediate School, established 2015.

Tauranga Intermediate School Confucius Classroom is a Chinese culture and language hub in Tauranga. It has made remarkable strides in promoting Chinese language and culture through its comprehensive programme, serving all its students with Mandarin lessons and cultural activities. The school holds an annual New Zealand Chinese Language Week (NZCLW) Chinese competition for local schools, which has grown significantly, attracting more than 240 entries across 10 categories in 2024 alone. The competition is co-organised with the Tauranga New Zealand China Friendship Society. The categories include speeches, Chinese storytelling, research projects, art, and calligraphy and celebrate China–New Zealand friendship.

Tauranga Intermediate School students celebrating the Year of the Dragon with their MLAs.



Western Heights High School, Rotorua, established 2015

Te Kura Kaupapa Motuhake O Tawhiuau, Murupara, established 2015

Wellington Girls' College, established 2014

Wellington East Girls' College, established 2015

Te Aro School, Wellington, established 2015

Wellington College, established 2013.

Wellington College has a strong and active Chinese language and culture programme. A key part of the Confucius Classroom is the lion dance club that has weekly trainings and performs at school assemblies and other large school events. Another highlight of 2024 was the sponsored school camp trip to China, where they visited Beijing and Xiamen.



Wellington College lion dance troupe.



CHINESE BRIDGE— FLY HIGH WITH CHINESE 汉语桥 - 追梦中文, 不负韶华

The speech competitions are a great incentive for students to improve language fluency and build interest in language and culture. This year, the Institute hosted the regional Chinese Bridge Speech Competitions for junior, secondary, and tertiary students.

With the themes of 'One world, one family' and 'Fly high with Chinese', the competition involved 17 participants from 10 schools and an enthusiastic audience of 80 supporters. Students were judged across the areas of speech-making, Q&A, and cultural performances, showcasing a variety of talents including dance, calligraphy, martial arts, Chinese traditional music, comedy, and Chinese handicraft demonstrations.

Phoebe Davey from Victoria University of Wellington was the tertiary champion, while Lachlan Rodda from Western Heights High School was the Senior Champion, and Lulu Dufty from Whanganui High School the Junior Champion. A new selection of awards for Original Content, Inspirational Speech, Cultural Understanding and Top Talent were also awarded to participants. Our senior and tertiary winners participated in the 23rd Chinese Bridge global competition in China. The Institute thanks the Chinese Embassy for their sponsorship of this regional event.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTS

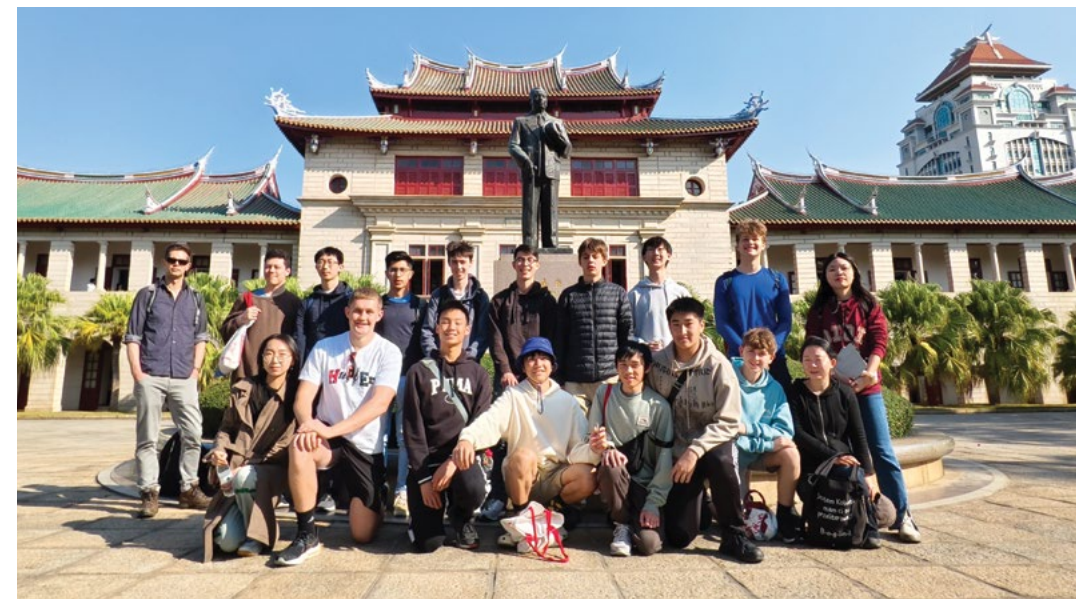
The Institute is a Test Centre offering HSK and YCT language proficiency tests for adults and schoolchildren. This year we have offered six language proficiency tests for 40 participants.



*Western Heights High School's
Lachlan Rodda competing in the
Global Bridge competition in China.*

2024 SCHOOL CAMP

Support of school camps to China is another effective way in which the Institute can help schools to inspire and motivate students in Chinese language learning. In November, students from our Confucius Classroom at Wellington College participated in a 10-day sponsored trip to Beijing and Xiamen. The trip was an immense success, with highlights such as learning about Chinese traditions at Xiamen University, exploring the Great Wall, discovering China's rich history through landmarks like the Forbidden City, and forming meaningful connections with local students.



LANGUAGE IN THE COMMUNITY

Our 10-week HSK Online Preparation courses continue to attract students. Two rounds of classes were run by Chinese teacher Chen Wenqian for 11 students from beginner to more advanced levels, and one-on-one tutoring was given to four people, with participants including staff and students from VUW and Massey University. The group classes run for 16 weeks, while the one-on-one sessions are 10 weeks long. Our overseas volunteer Mandarin Language Assistant also supported the Wellington Chinese Language School by teaching weekly classes.



MANDARIN CORNER

Our Wellington-based Mandarin Language Assistants hosted monthly meetings on Saturdays from March until November. These activities provide students and members of the public opportunities to practise conversation and learn the most up-to-date Chinese vocabulary and social trends. In 2024, popular topics were mahjong, masks of China, paper-cutting and Chinese chess.



Learning mahjong at a Mandarin Corner.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF NEW ZEALAND CHINESE LANGUAGE WEEK (NZCLW)

The Confucius Institute continues to play an active role in supporting this Kiwi-led initiative aimed at encouraging New Zealanders to discover Chinese language and culture. It is the first of its kind in any Western country. 2024 celebrated 10 years of New Zealand Chinese Language Week (NZCLW). The opening ceremony was held at parliament and honoured language superstars, youth ambassadors, and teachers. Our schools and Mandarin Language Assistants across the region celebrated the week by hosting special activities in their schools and communities.

As part of NZCLW, we co-hosted the inaugural NZCLW School Excellence Awards with the University of Auckland and University of Canterbury Confucius Institutes. These awards celebrated outstanding Chinese language and culture teaching at primary, secondary, and community schools across New Zealand.



Tauranga Intermediate School students performing during 2024 New Zealand Chinese Language Week competition event.



Otaki College students celebrated NZCLW with a day filled with Discover China activities, including ink blowing, dragon dancing, fan dancing and guzheng workshops.



NZCLW Teacher Awardee Limin Bai from Victoria University of Wellington receives her award from the Chinese Ambassador Wang Xiaolong, New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Luxon and Jo Coughlan, NZCLW Trust Chairperson.



Confucius Institute team with Wellington regional awardees; Youth Ambassadors Lulu Dufty and Lachlan Rodda, and Teacher Awardees Limin Bai and Gerald Yang.



University of Auckland, University of Canterbury and Victoria University of Wellington Confucius Institute leadership members with school awardees at inaugural NZCLW School Excellence Awards held in Auckland.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The success of Chinese learning at school and university lies in the quality and commitment of teachers. Our Institute works with the NZ Chinese Teachers Association and others to provide training, resources and to share knowledge at various events. Staff of the Institute attended the Training Program for Enhancing Teaching Competence under the Guidelines of International Chinese Education Standards hosted by Tui Tuia | Learning Circle. The Institute co-sponsors the New Zealand Association of Language Teachers (NZALT) Biennial Conference.

The Institute met with Wellington-based teachers in May and December to discuss issues affecting Chinese language teaching and our future work programme. The Institute provided a three-day orientation programme in March and a two-day professional development programme for its Mandarin Language Assistants (MLAs) in August with input from University staff, Chinese teachers, and others who support the MLA programme. These courses introduce the New Zealand education system and classroom and provide useful material and tips for teaching and life in New Zealand.



CI Chair Roger Shew explaining New Zealand culture with MLAs.



Wellington region Chinese teachers end of year dinner.



MLA Professional Development conference in Wellington.

PROMOTING CHINESE CULTURE AND THE ARTS

推广中国文化艺术

‘DISCOVER CHINA!’

Complementing language classes are the Institute’s popular Discover China! workshops in schools, the University, and communities. Our seven cultural experts and MLAs have supported over 120 interactive workshops for over 10,000 people at schools, libraries, city councils, community festivals, the University, Treasury, Ministry of Health, and a hospice. Activities included calligraphy, Chinese dancing, lion dance, Chinese musical instrument performances and workshops, paper-cutting and mooncake-making. We made full use of our team talents to celebrate festivals such as International Tea Day, the Dragon Boat Festival, and the Mid-Autumn Festival. We continue to look for individuals who can offer their Chinese cultural expertise to schools and the community, especially in centres outside of Wellington.

The Wellington Lunar New Year festival, Wellington Lantern Festival, Whanganui Lantern Festival, and University dragon boat team appreciate our ongoing support. We were also pleased to be able to support our 2023 Oceania Bridge Competition winner Telesia Tanoai’s documentary world premiere at Parliament. The short film follows her on her competition journey in China.



Dragonboat festival.



Serving tea on International Tea Day.



Wellington city Lunar New Year Festival with the Asia Events Trust.



Guzheng performance at Lanterns on the Awa in Whanganui.



RAISING AWARENESS OF THE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE’S WORK 提升对孔子学院工作的认知

Our WeChat and Facebook posts have steadily increased. Facebook remains our main platform for engaging with our New Zealand social audience, with followers increasing from 755 at the end of 2023 to 833 now. Our posts have reached more than 27,000 people so far this year, triple last year’s reach. Regular WeChat stories involving Mandarin Language Assistant (MLA) activities are helpful for students looking to come here as MLAs.



Wellington City Lantern Festival with the Wellington Chinese Communities Group Trust.



2024 MLAS

Wellington:

 Weng Xin	 Huang Lingchu	 Wang Jing	 Liu Ruoyun
 Sun Jing	 Zhang Mingying	 Zheng Xumeng	 Chen Yingfei

Upper Hutt:

 Zhu Xiaochen	 Li Jiao
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Kapiti:

 Wang Siyao

Whanganui:

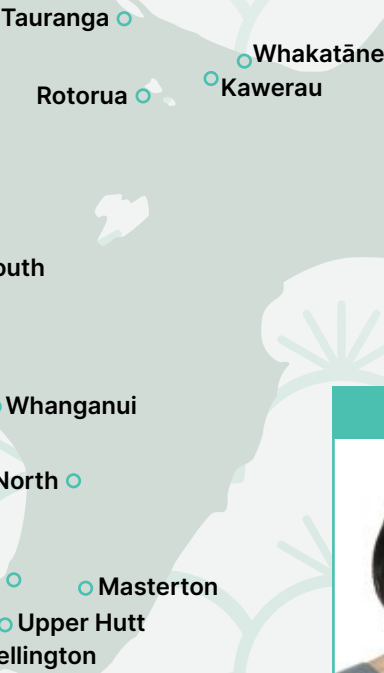
 Wang Yi
--

Masterton:

 Fu Yongping
--

New Plymouth:

 Deng Tingting	 Wu Jinqu
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Kawerau:

 Su Chang
--

Whakatane:

 Yang Huixian
--

Tauranga:

 Chai Yingying	 Zhang Shuang	 Wu Danlei
--	---	--

Rotorua:

 Hu Minyao	 Yang Dian	 Zhang Yuying
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SPECIAL THANKS 特别感谢

OUR PARTNERS 我们的合作伙伴

Victoria University of Wellington 惠灵顿维多利亚大学

School of Languages and Culture 语言文化学院

New Zealand School of Music 新西兰音乐学院

Xiamen University 厦门大学

Confucius Institutes of New Zealand at Auckland and Canterbury
奥克兰孔子学院, 坎特伯雷大学孔子学院

Centre for Language Education and Cooperation 中外语言合作交流中心

Chinese International Education Foundation 国际中文教育基金会

Ministries of Education, New Zealand and China 中华人民共和国教育部、新西兰教育部

New Zealand Chinese Language Teachers' Association 新西兰中文教师协会

Tui Tuia|Learning Circle 学习圈

New Zealand Chinese Language Week Trust 新西兰中文周基金会

Embassy of the People's Republic of China 中华人民共和国驻新西兰大使馆

ADVISORY BOARD 理事会成员

Roger Shew, Chair of Confucius Institute 2023–2024

Chen Zhiwei, Co-chair, Xiamen University 2021–

Tony Browne, Former Chair, 2011–2021, 2024–

Yu Hongbo, Xiamen University 2023–

Professor Bing Xue, Victoria University of Wellington 2024–

Luo Hui, Arts Adviser 2024–

OUR STAFF 孔院工作人员

Director 外方院长 Fiona Mann 费安娜

Deputy Director 中方院长 Wen Chen 陈雯

Chinese Teachers 中文教师 Chen Wenqian 陈文倩

Zhixiang Zhou 周志香

Project Coordinator 项目主管 Nicole Bernas 妮可

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ANALECTS OF CONFUCIUS

The quotes from Confucius in this publication were selected and translated by Dr Luo Hui, Senior Lecturer in the VUW Chinese Programme and Confucius Institute VUW Arts Adviser.

学而时习之, 不亦说乎?

To learn and practise what you've learnt—is that not a joyful thing?

三人行, 必有我师焉。

In the company of three, there must be one from whom I can learn.

工欲善其事, 必先利其器。

To do the work well, first sharpen the tools.

任重而道远。

The load is heavy, the road long.

听其言而观其行。

Hear their words, then look at their actions.

学而不厌, 诲人不倦。

Study tirelessly, and tirelessly enlighten others.

兴于诗, 立于礼, 成于乐。

Inspire the mind with poetry, build character with propriety, and finish with music.

知之者不如好之者, 好之者不如乐之者。

Better to love it than to know it, and even better to enjoy it.

与人歌而善, 必使反之, 而后和之。

When Confucius heard a song he loved, he would ask to have it repeated, then harmonise with it.

知者乐水, 仁者乐山。

The wise find joy in water, the virtuous feel at home in the hills.

不学诗, 无以言。

Without learning poetry, one has nothing worthwhile to say.



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