

Programme Leader – GeoNet and DART

Reports to:	Operations Manager - Data Science & Geohazards Monitoring	Position Status:	Permanent
Unit:	Science Operations – Geological Systems	Location:	Avalon, Lower Hutt
Department:	Data Science & Geohazard Monitoring	Team:	N/A
Direct Reports:	Nil but large project team	Budget & Delegated Authority:	Refer to Delegated Financial Authority Policy
Career Step:		Job Family:	Business Performance
Career Path:	Corporate	Date:	August 2025

Role Purpose

Lead the GeoNet and Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunami (DART) programmes to deliver their contracted outcomes, align their strategic direction, and ensure each programme is effectively planned, funded, governed and delivered through Earth Sciences NZ's matrixed capability.

Position Priorities and Responsibilities

Programme Delivery

- Deliver the outcomes of the GeoNet and DART contracts, translating contract commitments into a coherent set of projects and workstreams for each programme and holding them to account for delivery.
- Create and commission projects to deliver contract outcomes, working through project leaders drawn from across the organisational matrix and securing resource and capability through the Operations Manager and peer managers. Where demand exceeds available capacity, escalate prioritisation to the Operations Manager.
- Agree service commitments with the Service Delivery Manager, buying products and services from costed service offerings within the programme budgets, and hold the Service Delivery function to those commitments.
- Oversee the DART operational cycle through its project leaders: planning and coordination of deployment, maintenance, recovery and servicing, with delivery drawn from science, technology, marine operations and logistics teams.
- Own programme risk for both programmes: maintain each programme's risk register, incorporating delivery risks fed in from the Service Delivery function, and ensure risks are visible to the relevant governance group.
- Monitor and report each programme's performance, delivery and value to its governance groups and funders.

- Deliver through projects and services drawn from across Earth Sciences NZ, buying products and services from the Service Delivery function and securing capability through the Operations Manager and peer managers.

Programme Strategy and Planning

- Own and maintain each programme's strategy and multi-year workplan: GeoNet's aligned with the GeoNet contract, stakeholder priorities set by the GeoNet Steering Group and the mission science strategy held by the General Manager Mission - Geological Hazards; DART's aligned with its contractual obligations and the future development of the DART service. Keep the two strategies aligned but distinct, so the programmes evolve alongside each other as related but separate programmes.
- Work with the GeoNet Science Lead as a peer, recognising that GeoNet science strategy is accountable to the General Manager Mission - Geological Hazards and carried day to day by the GeoNet Science Lead, whose science view spans both the GeoNet and DART programmes.
- Lead strategic review processes and adapt programme plans to address challenges and opportunities.

Funding and Stakeholder Engagement

- Front stakeholders for both programmes, including funding conversations, and maintain effective relationships with government funders, agencies, iwi, communities and research partners.
- Develop funding cases, bids and the sustained funding narratives that support GeoNet and DART through prioritisation rounds and service evolution.
- Maintain relationship management plans for key funder and stakeholder relationships, and represent the programmes at relevant forums and working groups.

Financial Management

- Hold the GeoNet and DART programme budgets and act within the company's delegated financial authorities.
- Allocate each programme budget across projects and purchased services to maximise value for money against contract outcomes, reprioritising as circumstances change.
- Report financial performance to governance groups and funders, and ensure spend is transparent and defensible.

Governance

- Run governance support for the GeoNet programme, including providing the secretariat for the GeoNet Steering Group: prepare papers, risk and performance reporting, and support the Chair.
- Support the GeoNet Advisory Panel, attending with the Steering Group Chair and preparing material as required.
- Support the DART programme's own governance arrangements, separate from the GeoNet Steering Group, including papers, risk and performance reporting.
- Ensure robust assurance, review and oversight processes operate across both programmes.

Responsibilities of all Employees

- Comply with all Earth Sciences New Zealand policies, procedures and frameworks, and act in line with the organisational values.

- Contribute to our healthy and safe workplace by following HSW expectations outlined in and integrated into our operational practises and HSW frameworks, including undertaking HSW training and participating in health-monitoring programmes relevant to your work.
- Work effectively as a team member by fostering good relationships and supporting others, providing coverage of other functions as required and ensuring workloads are evenly spread.
- Have the flexibility to adapt and develop as the organisation and its environment evolves.

Key Working Relationships

Internal	External
• Operations Manager - Data Science & Geohazards Monitoring (DSGM); Service Delivery Manager and Service Delivery Team; DART project leaders; GeoNet Science Lead; General Manager Mission - Geological Hazards; DSGM management, staff and project teams; marine operations and logistics teams; Science Expert Panels and Monitoring Groups; Chief Scientists and science strategy team; Research Office; Project Management Office; Finance; Communications; Commercial and Business Partnerships Team	• Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE); National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA); Land Information New Zealand (LINZ); Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake (NHC); Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT); Department of Internal Affairs (DIA); the Treasury; Department of Conservation (DoC); regional CDEM sector; iwi/Māori organisations; research community including universities; international monitoring partners. Strategic funder relationships sit with this role; engagement on operational and service delivery matters sits with the Service Delivery Manager.

Person Specification

Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Relevant tertiary qualification in business, science or engineering, or extensive equivalent experience.
- Proven track record leading large-scale, multi-year, multimillion-dollar programmes with high stakeholder complexity, delivered through matrixed resources rather than direct reports.
- Demonstrated success securing and managing public funding, including business case and funding bid development.
- Experience operating programme governance: steering groups, advisory panels, assurance and review processes.
- Experience holding and managing programme budgets within delegated financial authorities.

Desirable

- Experience and understanding of New Zealand's science and research system, including funding mechanisms and policy drivers.
- Knowledge of the natural hazards and emergency management landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Knowledge of sensing infrastructure, marine operations or complex partner environments.
- Programme management certification (MSP or equivalent).

Skills, Knowledge and Attributes

Essential

- Leads through influence, not authority: skilled at brokering resource and capability across a matrixed organisation and holding contributors to account without a reporting line.
- Exceptional stakeholder and funder engagement skills, with the ability to influence credibly at senior levels of government and partner agencies.
- Excellent strategic thinking, planning and problem-solving skills, comfortable making trade-offs in fiscally constrained environments.
- Strong financial management skills: budgeting, allocation, value for money and transparent reporting.
- Excellent written and verbal communication, including governance papers, business cases and funding narratives.
- Works effectively alongside deep science and technical expertise, respecting the science voice while holding the programme's delivery and financial realities.
- Resilient, adaptable and collaborative, with high integrity.