

# Donna Howell

PMP, PMI-ACP, BArch (Hons), Reg Arch, ANZIA, MInstD



I am passionate about strengthening businesses and organisations through best practice governance to drive strategic and operational alignment, sustainability, and community well-being. With a strong and uniquely broad portfolio of governance and management experience, I have a particular interest in the power of user-centric 'design thinking' and agile practices to drive innovation, transformation, and growth. I bring to the board table the ability to channel diverse perspectives, the skill and willingness to constructively challenge ideas, and a creative, long term strategic view.

## Board Strengths

### Functional Skills

- Risk and value management, benefits management, planning and idea generation.
- Design and implementation of project management and governance structures.
- Planning and executing complex stakeholder management.
- Relationship development and management.
- Consultative leadership.
- 3PM best practice.
- User-centric strategy development.
- Design thinking.
- Agile methodologies.
- Legal and compliance.
- Facilitation to support complex problem solving.

### Governance Attributes

- Diverse background in the public and private sector, from NFPs to government departments to listed companies.
- Strategic thinking, able to bring clarity to complex information, and confidently articulate insights and ideas to collaborative solutions development.
- Diverse experience in leadership and people management.
- Learning mindset – open-minded and intellectually curious, particularly with respect to opportunities and ways to 'be better'
- Courage to question.
- Strong integrity and ethical capability.
- Chair experience.
- Actively involved in strategic level advocacy for increased collaboration, innovation and diversity in capital project delivery, and for quality and sustainability in the built environment.
- Committed to on-going personal and professional development.

## **Governance Experience**

### **Project Management Institute New Zealand**

*Co-opted Board Member, October 2022 to present*

*Construction Special Industry Group, Founding Chair, November 2023 to present*

### **The Housing Innovation Society Inc**

*Elected Interim Board Member, establishment phase, August 2020 to October 2021*

### **NZ Construction Industry Council**

*Deputy Chair, Council Executive Member, Delegate, 2015 to present*

Active and consistent participant, helping to shape council strategic direction via contribution of expertise and insight built on length and breadth of industry experience. Currently providing strategic guidance and governance oversight to a review of the CIC Design Guidelines and development of a standard scope document for professional project management services in collaboration with the New Zealand Institute of Building. NZCIC is the collaborative voice for the built environment industry in New Zealand and operates at the interface between government (central and local) and industry.

### **Otautahi Community Housing Trust**

*Independent Adviser, July 2017 to December 2022*

As an Independent Adviser to the Trust, contributing expertise in shaping of strategy and quality assurance in project and portfolio management, procurement, and architectural and urban design. As Independent Adviser I attend Board meetings, providing expertise and advice specifically on agenda items relating to new development, including sustainability and risk.

### **NZ Registered Architects Board**

*Member, Public Protection Committee, 2012 to 2020*

Contributing a broader industry perspective in the provision of advice to the NZRAB board on the development and implementation of policies and procedures, alternative dispute resolution options, the NZ Architects Register and protection of title.

### **National Association of Women in Construction**

*Board Member, President and Board Chair, November 2012 to November 2018*

Instrumental in forming the first NAWIC National Board, including development and subsequent review and refresh of the strategic plan, drafting the founding constitution, setting up governance systems and procedures, branding, partnerships, sponsorship frameworks and liaising with media. NAWIC was a recipient of an NZIA President's Award in 2017, during my term as President.

## **Professional Experience**

### **University of Otago**

*Project Director, University of Otago Christchurch Campus Redevelopment, January 2021 to present*

The largest project in the University's history, involving design, construction, commissioning and transition to operation of a new six-storey building on Oxford Terrace, Christchurch for the School of Medicine.

### **Green Light Projects Limited**

*Director, Principal Consultant, July 2011 to present*

### **Auckland International Airport (AIAL)**

*Project Lead, Domestic Jet Facility, November 2018 to February 2020*

Delivered strong, empathetic leadership of a highly qualified and experienced team of AIAL employees, domestic and international consultants and contractors through requirements definition, scoping, design, delivery planning and Alliance formation for the new Domestic JetHub (DJH), project value \$1.6B. Required regular Board reporting, presentations, and meeting attendance. Key contributor to review and reset of Long Term Capital Plan.

### **The Project Office**

*Project Director, Lincoln University and AgResearch Joint Facility, March 2015 to July 2018*

Successfully led a team of consultants and client employees in the face of significant challenges including exacting technical requirements, fast track delivery, non-traditional procurement, staged consenting, numerous and diverse stakeholders, and a high level of public scrutiny. Construction value circa \$180M. The Joint Facility was to provide AgResearch, Lincoln University and Dairy NZ with new laboratories, office, and education space to accommodate approximately 680 staff. Required regular Board reporting, presentations, and attendance.

### **Tregaskis Brown Ltd**

*Associate Consultant and Specialist Trainer, March 2013 to February 2019*

Business and management consulting, including investment logic mapping, development, and implementation of 3PM frameworks, strategy development and capability building via coaching / mentoring and formal training.

### **Project Director, VUW School of Architecture, US Department of Energy 2011 Solar Decathlon**

*Victoria University of Wellington, NZ, March 2011 to May 2012*

### **Senior Project Manager**

*Arrow International Ltd, Wellington, NZ, August 2007 to March 2011*

### **Client Representative / Programme Design Manager, Regional Prisons Development Programme**

*Department of Corrections, Wellington, NZ, August 2001 to July 2007*

## **Education & Training**

Bachelor of Architecture (Hons), University of Auckland, NZ (1993)

Senior Prize in Architecture (1992)

Master of Construction (Construction Law) – in progress, anticipated completion 2024

Project Management Institute – Agile Certified Practitioner® (2020)

Project Management Professional® certification (2008)

Certificate in **Design Thinking for Innovation**, University of Virginia Darden School of Business

Certificate in **Design-Led Strategy**: Design thinking for business strategy and entrepreneurship,  
University of Sydney School of Business

IoD Finance Module, 2021

Certified Practitioner (Elephant Rider), Emotional Culture Deck

Gateway Reviewer (NZ Treasury)

Better Business Case Practitioner

Te Wananga o Aotearoa Certificate in Mauri Ora

## **Professional Affiliations and Memberships**

Member and Volunteer, Project Management Institute New Zealand

Architect Member, New Zealand Institute of Architects

Member, New Zealand Institute of Directors

Member, New Zealand Society of Construction Law

Life Member, National Association of Women in Construction