

Michelle Dickinson

Job title: Nanotechnologist, Senior lecturer at The University of Auckland

Can you tell us a little bit about your job?/ What's an average day like for you?

I'm a nanotechnologist who works in a university, so my time is split between teaching and researching. I love both parts of my job; the teaching side is so rewarding as I love the expression on my students faces when they understand a concept and I know they will use that knowledge in their future careers. In my research lab, I have so many exciting projects happening from developing medical nanoparticles to help fight diseases, to developing new nanoelectric materials to help power your smartphone. An average day always has to have some fun in there too, and I'll try to go out for a surf or a paddle board as part of my day as I think its important to know that the healthier and less stressed your mind is the better you are in your work.



What sparked your interest in Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM)? How did you start on your path to a career in STEM and what did that path look like?

I've always been fascinated with how things work, and spent my childhood pulling things apart at home. I naturally found science and maths easy at school, so I picked those subjects because I really enjoyed them. I think for me I really found enjoyment in the discovery of understanding how our new DVD player actually took information from a round disc and turned it into an image on our TV – however, sadly to do this I had to take it apart to see what was inside and was never actually able to put it all back together.

What would you say to young folks who are thinking about a career in STEM?

Do what you love and follow your dreams. Careers in STEM are so rewarding and being able to use your knowledge to help solve problems and work with other amazing inspirational people is such a great experience. Knowing that what you do can make a difference to the world's future and you can help to solve big issues is one of the more humbling aspects of STEM, and it means you go home every day with an immensely satisfying feeling in your heart.