



EcoGene's Gleeson secures entrepreneurship prize

The Inaugural Women in Science Entrepreneurship Award has gone to a Landcare Research DNA diagnostic facility director.

Friday, July 29 2011 || Science || BY Unlimited

Dr Dianne Gleeson, who oversees Landcare Research's DNA diagnostic facility EcoGene, has won the first Women in Science Entrepreneurship Award.

Gleeson leads a team of 20 scientists and post-graduate students at EcoGene, whose analytical services include detecting new organisms, monitoring pest species, disease monitoring and threatened species management.

Auckland life sciences and clean tech firm Pacific Channel will give Gleeson \$50,000 worth of venture development advice and access to an international advisory board experienced in science commercialisation. The award judges - Amira Pharmaceuticals co-founder Dr Jilly Evans; Trilogy co-founder Sarah Gibbs; and Pacific Channel's Mitali Purohit - will form the advisory board.

The award will encourage more women to join the industry's top ranks, says Gleeson.

"There is growing commercial demand for scientific services and women can make a valuable contribution to the development of the industry in New Zealand and overseas."

The award was presented at the Association for Women in the Sciences conference in Auckland yesterday.

Runners up were Dr Fern Kelly, a textile chemistry PhD graduate from Victoria University, who developed an environmentally friendly antibacterial treatment for high quality natural textiles; and Rachael D'Arcy Lacy of D'Arcy Polychrome, who developed a technology to produce encapsulated dry colour pigments that are mixed into liquid paint.

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