

Te Tauihu Pūtaiao



The tauihu (or prow) carved by Sonny Davis (Ngāi Tuhoe) of Waiwhetu Marae is a physical manifestation of IRL's Māori identity – Te Tauihu Pūtaiao.

This literally translates as “the prow of science”. The prow is the cutting edge of the waka as it moves through new and often uncharted waters.

The waka itself embodies centuries of knowledge applied in its construction and use: knowledge of materials and engineering; of navigation and astronomy; and of harnessing forces. The crew, working in harmony, propel the vessel towards a newer world.

Just as the voyages of discovery of Polynesian vessels through the Pacific opened up new opportunities – such as Aotearoa – IRL science and engineering provide the research excellence to open up new economic opportunities for New Zealand industries.

