



Introducing the T-Platform

What is the T-Platform?

The T-Platform aims to provide co-ordination and practical support to adapt and embed new approaches to research. Its focus is on the “how” and we will measure its success in terms of the change on the ground, as opposed to addressing a research hypothesis or question.

The ‘T’ in T-Platform stands for transformative and transdisciplinary research approaches:

Transformative research aspires to deliver a system change at the societal level with beneficial environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes.

Transdisciplinary programmes involve the integration of knowledge and methods across different science disciplines, as well as those from outside science. Together the participants shape and share the direction of the research, outputs and outcomes.

The T-Platform will contribute to a big overall vision – enabling the transition to a sustainable agri-food system in Aotearoa New Zealand. This will be done through supporting and enabling AgResearch researchers and research partners to:

Successfully engage in the **design and delivery of transdisciplinary research practices** to address **complex problems or challenges**, in ways that acknowledge **societal, cultural, and ethical values as critical factors** of a **transition** towards a more **sustainable agri-food system** in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Why is the T-Platform needed?

- Increasingly complex societal issues (e.g. climate change), in a time of rapid change, require radically different approaches to innovation and research.
- The NZ agri-food sector is transitioning towards more sustainable food production systems, yet the role of the researcher and the research organisation in the transition is often unclear.
- There is increased demand by the public, Māori partners and stakeholders for more values-based research approaches that deliver societal, cultural, environmental, and economic outcomes.
- Integrated (including transdisciplinary) approaches, where representatives of multiple perspectives collaborate to find and implement solutions together, are suited to responding to complex issues but require researchers and research organisations to work differently.

The T-Platform will help to respond to this by:

- Providing support to build individual, organisational, and 'in time' systems capacity and capability (including soft skills) to respond to a rapidly evolving innovation landscape.
- Practically equipping AgResearch researchers, partners, and stakeholders to design and deliver the type of programmes that respond to these complex societal challenges.

The T-Platform has five objectives:

- 1 **Enhance capacity and capability** of AgResearch staff and partners to lead and participate in integrated research programmes.
- 2 **Link and connect** between existing and new related initiatives in AgResearch and beyond.
- 3 Equip AgResearch and its partners to **engage with and help shape the transition towards a more sustainable agri-food system.**
- 4 Build capacity and capability that will develop and strengthen our relationships with **Māori partners and Te Ao Māori**, in partnership with other AgResearch groups and initiatives
- 5 **Monitor, evaluate, reflect, and learn from what is working and what is not** within an AgResearch context and to share this within and external to the organisation.

Who is it for?

The initial focus (during 2022 and 2023) is supporting AgResearch's Integrated Initiatives and Platforms Portfolio, and other larger research programmes – the researchers involved and their stakeholders and partners.

However, we will work collaboratively, both nationally and internationally, to use this platform as a springboard to drive national and international conversations around the processes that bring about transformative change.

Principles guiding the Platform

- The whole is greater than the sum of its parts – we all have a role to play
- Shared learning and reflection
- Building on what has gone before, while looking towards the future
- There is no one-size fits all; and many of the solutions already exist
- Reciprocity

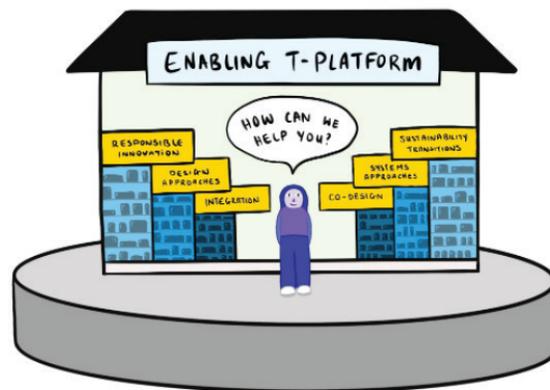


Figure 1: The T Platform is conceptualised as a 'library' – a space you can borrow different approaches/ tools/ methods for your own needs – and return your own adaptations with an evaluation of how it went. This enables us to build up a body of tested knowledge and practice.

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