

# Graduate Women New Zealand (GWNZ) Scholarship Report 2025

## Kisha September

I would like to begin by expressing my deep and sincere gratitude to Graduate Women New Zealand for awarding me this scholarship in 2025. To be recognised and supported in this way, at such a critical stage of my doctoral journey, has meant more than I can fully articulate. This support has not only enabled my research to continue — it has strengthened my sense of purpose, reaffirmed the value of my work, and reminded me that what I am building matters.

## Current Stage of Study

I am currently in the final phase of my PhD, with submission scheduled for **October 2026**. This stage of the journey carries both weight and momentum — it is a time of refinement, clarity, and deep commitment to bringing the work to completion.

My research centres on reimagining choreographic pedagogy through relational frameworks, grounded in the understanding that choreography is not simply the organisation of movement, but a living, relational process. It is a way of shaping how people come to know themselves and one another — through movement, through interaction, and through shared experience.

## Development of the Choreographic Resource

At the heart of my work is the creation of a **practice-led choreographic resource**. This year, that resource has taken on greater depth, definition, and purpose.

It has become a space where theory meets lived experience — where ideas are not only written, but embodied. The resource is designed to support educators in intentionally creating environments that hold space for:

- Belonging
- Trust
- Shared authorship
- Embodied ways of knowing

What has been most meaningful in this process is witnessing the shift from abstract thinking into something tangible — something that can be carried, used, and experienced by others. The resource is not just an outcome of the research; it is a reflection of the relationships, negotiations, and learning that have shaped the journey itself.

### **Impact of the GWNZ Scholarship**

The GWNZ scholarship has played a profound role in this stage of my work. It has created the conditions for focus — the kind of focus that allows ideas to deepen rather than rush, to be carefully formed rather than simply completed.

This support has enabled me to:

- Fully invest in the development of the choreographic resource
- Give time and attention to refining its structure and clarity
- Strengthen the connection between my practice and my written thesis

More than anything, this scholarship has given me the space to do this work with integrity.

It has also offered something less tangible, but equally important — a sense of being seen. To have this work recognised by Graduate Women New Zealand has affirmed that the direction I am moving in is not only valid, but valued. That affirmation carries weight, particularly in the final stages of a PhD, where the work becomes both intensely personal and deeply demanding.

### **Looking Ahead**

As I move toward submission in October, I do so with a strong sense of responsibility — to the research, to the communities it speaks to, and to the future spaces it may shape.

My focus now is on bringing the thesis and the choreographic resource together in a way that is cohesive, clear, and impactful. I am committed to ensuring that this work extends beyond the page — that it lives in classrooms, in studios, and in the ways educators and students come to relate to one another.

### **Ongoing Connection with GWNZ**

I would also like to express my genuine desire to continue my connection with Graduate Women New Zealand beyond this scholarship.

What GWNZ represents — a commitment to supporting women, to education, and to meaningful contribution — deeply resonates with me. To be part of a network that uplifts, recognises, and invests in women’s work is something I value greatly.

I would be honoured to become a **member in 2026 and beyond**, and to remain connected to a community that stands for both excellence and care.

### **Closing**

Thank you, truly, for your generosity, your support, and your belief in my work. This scholarship has made a lasting impact on my journey this year — not only in what it has enabled, but in how it has allowed me to continue this work with confidence, intention, and heart.

Ngā mihi nui,

**Kisha September**