

INFRASTRUCTURE WOMEN IN FOCUS



WIN NZ has been established to increase the visibility of women in the infrastructure sector. Every month we profile a different woman working in a different part of the industry. If you would like to be profiled, or would like to nominate someone to be profiled, please answer the questions below and send your picture through to [Tara](#).

We'd like to introduce Roberta Johnson as our next Woman of Focus. Roberta is a member of WIN Auckland.



ROBERTA JOHNSON
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
HEALTH CO-LEAD
JASMAX

1. What company or organisation do you work for and what is your role there?

I am an Associate Principal at Jasmax, and my current role is co-leader of the Health Team.

2. Tell us about your career background and how you got to this position/role?

I chose to study architecture as I realised that it provided the opportunity for creativity with defined purpose. When the first physical thing I ever designed was built, I was hit by the realisation that experienced and dedicated craftspeople had taken time and care to build what I had imagined and drawn. That sense of gratitude and the recognition of the collective effort of building something beautiful and long-lasting remains with me today.

I joined Jasmax six years ago as an architectural briefing specialist in the Education team – specifically to work on the briefing for a very complex project – AUT's new School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematical Sciences – now known as Ngā Wai Hono, which opened in 2018. After working on a variety of interesting projects, I was given the opportunity to co-lead the team responsible for the recent evolution of the Jasmax Brand identity, which won several Gold Best awards in November 2020. In developing an identity statement that encapsulated the spirit of Jasmax for the future, it became clear that many people in our business share that same sense of commitment to collective endeavour, and this is now captured in the Jasmax Manifesto.

Working on the Jasmax brand identity was a fantastic experience, and with that project substantially complete at the end of 2019, I was invited to join the Health Team – a new sector filled with new and invigorating challenges!

3. Tell us about a project you are currently working on and why it interests you?

I am currently leading a project for a new rural community health centre for Whanganui DHB and Ngāti Rangī Iwi in Raetihi. While the project is small in floor area and budget, it is large in both vision and effort. It has emerged from a community-led initiative – the Ruapehu Transformation Plan, which addresses the very real inequality and deprivation in this community where, for example, 30 families live in 11 houses.

The Ruapehu Wellness Centre project may be a potential test case for an integrated model of care in rural communities. It will ultimately provide a one-stop shop for patients and their whanau – where GPs, nurses, a variety of health and wellness practitioners, specialist clinicians, Whanau Ora, Iwi, and other community providers work closely together out of the same space to support community needs. It will enable people to be seen by multiple providers and practitioners in a single visit with the aim of addressing their needs both proactively and holistically. Wellness is at the heart of this project.

4. What's the hardest job you've ever done and why?

Being totally honest, I would have to say parenting is both the best and hardest job I have ever undertaken. When you become a parent, you are forced to confront your very best and very worst personality traits. No one

can tell you that it will all work out in the end, especially when you make mistakes. You just have to try and do it differently next time and not keep repeating the same mistakes. Like parenting, in life the biggest, hardest, most difficult jobs are often the most rewarding – or maybe it's the other way round?

5. Can you think of one example where your "diversity" has materially affected the outcome of a work situation or project, either positively or negatively?

I feel very fortunate to say I do not feel I have been discriminated against for being a woman working in architecture. However, being a female architect is a bit like being an actress. There are lots of roles when you are young. Women paving lifelong careers in architecture are still perceived as pioneers. I really look forward to a future where there are so many powerful female role models working at all levels of the construction industry that it is no longer worthy of comment, but still cause for celebration!

Along with Jasmax health team lead Sarah Hayden, I am hoping we can provide a work ecosystem that is supportive of employees of all genders, ethnicities, and ages, but especially those with young families so they remain engaged and able to develop their careers alongside other responsibilities. It became starkly apparent over lockdown that this group were placed under extreme stress – with some having to work into the night and parent during the day. We are focused on growing our thriving and diverse team for the future.

To learn more about opportunities for a career with Jasmax click [here](#) or you can connect with Roberta on [LinkedIn](#).

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