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Auckland Museum appoints new Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive

Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum is pleased to announce the appointment of David Reeves as Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive.

Reeves has been the Director of Collections and Research at Auckland Museum since 2011, a role in which he has led transformational change in the Museum's curatorial, collections and conservation practices. As a member of the Museum's executive team, he has led innovative digital collection access projects, contributed to major building projects and been a driving force behind a number of meaningful cultural developments.

Reeves was raised in the small Manawatu settlement of Aokautere and attended Awatapu College. He studied Architecture at Victoria University of Wellington and Professional Photography and Museum Studies at Massey University. With a career spanning more than 35 years, Reeves has extensive experience across Aotearoa's cultural sector and has held senior roles at major institutions including the Alexander Turnbull Library, Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Art Gallery and Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

His contributions to the community are far-ranging and span decades. His current professional affiliations and Board appointments include his role as trustee and Deputy Chair of UNESCO Memory of the World NZ committee and Board member of Museums Aotearoa, the national membership and advocacy body for the museum sector, trustee of the Rule Foundation, a philanthropic charity supporting rainbow communities, and past co-Chair of GALS, Auckland's rainbow choir.

Reeves brings fresh perspectives on the galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) sector to the Chief Executive role, alongside a keen interest in how the sector is responding to and utilising the digital environment. He is a strong believer in working proactively and collaboratively with allied organisations to achieve the Museum's aims in advancing understandings about our social and natural worlds. Reeves is also focused on strengthening the Museum's bicultural approach to its work and engagement with communities.

Previously in his career, Reeves has been a member and Chair of the Library and Information Advisory Commission, and member and Deputy Chair of the Archives Council, in both roles advising Government on policy matters and issues facing the library, archive and record-keeping sectors. He is a past Council member of the Australasian Registrars' Committee, the professional body of museum registrars and collection managers in Australia and New Zealand, where he led the revision of the constitution to formally include Aotearoa. Prior to this, he sat on the National Digital Forum Steering Committee, Museum Qualifications Working Group, NZ Registrars' Network, and was a trustee of the Thorndon Trust and Lesbian and Gay Archives of New Zealand.

Auckland Museum Trust Board Chair Professor Richard Bedford says, "It is a privilege to appoint such a talented and innovative employee to lead the museum as we develop our next strategic plan, which will take us to 2029 – the centenary of our time on this sacred site and war memorial on Pukekawa."

"The Board's vision is to ensure that Tāmaki Paenga Hira continues its journey to becoming a bicultural Museum, supporting an inclusive society of engaged and informed communities in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa and the Pacific."

"We are confident that David Reeves has the experience, passion and commitment to deliver this ambitious goal," says Bedford.

Taumata-a-Iwi Chair Precious Clark says, "We are excited to continue to support David in his leadership of Tāmaki Paenga Hira. The Taumata-ā-Iwi has built a high trust relationship with David over the years, and values his support and advocacy of kaupapa Māori, taonga Māori and our Māori staff at the Museum."

"We look forward to collaborating with David to shift Tāmaki Paenga Hira into being a bicultural organisation of the future. We are confident that his institutional knowledge, empathy, commitment and intelligence will provide us with the right leadership to achieve our strategic vision," says Clark.

On his appointment Reeves says, "I am excited to be taking up a new role at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum at this pivotal time for our city and wider communities. Museums have a vital role to play in helping people examine, enjoy and understand their cultural and natural contexts."

"Auckland War Memorial Museum is a very special place with a rich history and extraordinary collections; it will be a great pleasure to lead our talented team over the next few years, realising more of the potential that the Museum has to offer. I also look forward to building upon key relationships with sector colleagues and our main funder, Auckland Council."

Reeves has been Interim Chief Executive for the Museum since the departure of former Director, Dr David Gaimster in June. He formally commences the permanent position on 1 September.

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For more information, images or interviews contact:

Samantha McKegg, Publicist

Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum

smckegg@aucklandmuseum.com | +64 21 458 353

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ABOUT AUCKLAND WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Auckland War Memorial Museum is one of New Zealand's first museums. The Museum tells the story of New Zealand, its place in the Pacific and its people. The Museum is a war memorial for the province of Auckland and holds one of New Zealand's top three heritage libraries.

It has pre-eminent Māori and Pacific collections, significant natural history resources and major social and military history collections, as well as decorative arts and pictorial collections.