

COVER SHEET – PGF SKILLS & EMPLOYMENT (HE POUTAMA RANGATHI)

2.2 Wahine Toa (He Poutama Rangatahi Application)		For: Approval	
Tier:	1 - Regional	Sector:	Skills
Background & context:		Recommendation(s):	
<p>Applicant Organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RecruitMe NZ Ltd <p>Location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Hokianga and Kaikohe <p>Proposal:</p> <p>This proposal is a unique pilot programme targeting young women for training and employment in the forestry sector. Wahine Toa is a 5 month intensive programme to provide specialist training in both soft and hard skills, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> forestry silviculture riparian planting nursery work predator and weed control First Aid qualifications Level 2 NZ Certificate in Forest Industry Foundation Skills. <p>The ^{Comm} participants will be rangatahi NEET between the ages of 16-24 at risk of long term unemployment. They will be supported through the training with intensive, individualised pastoral care.</p> <p>The applicant will support the participants into employment as well as support their ongoing progression in the forestry industry past project completion.</p> <p>Grant Funding Sought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total project value: \$ ^{Commercial Inform} Commercial Information 		<p>We recommend that the SRO(s)</p> <p>a) Approve \$421,050 from He Poutama Rangatahi (HPR) funding within Tier 1 of the Provincial Growth Fund for the Wahine Toa programme.</p> <p>b) NOTE this is an innovative pilot to increase female participation in forestry industry by targeting rangatahi aged 16-24 who are NEET</p> <p>c) NOTE the applicant has completed the provision of an earlier HPR-funded forestry training programme in September 2018 and that 75% of those participants remain employed including three who had been promoted to more senior positions.</p> <p>d) NOTE the programme has the support of the Northland regional governance group, MSD, DOC, MPI, the Northland District Council and local hapū.</p> <p>e) NOTE that due to the success of the applicant's HPR programmes, we are working with the Ministry of Social Development and the Tertiary Education Commission to develop a sustainable long-term funding model for future projects.</p>	

Background:

Increasing the female workforce in the traditionally male-dominated forestry industry will help to address the sector's labour shortages. New Zealand's first all-female forestry crew is now working at Timberlands Tangaroa Forest, near Waiotapu in South Waikato.

This project is a pilot based on the applicant's Eco Toa all-male forestry training programme (approved for HPR funding by SROs on 24 January 2019). The applicant is trialling the programme for women. The applicant has estimated the number of potential female participants in the Hokianga region at 10. As the programme has capacity for 15, he plans to train 5 young men as well, but in separate crews. (The all-female crew model is seen as a solution to the industry's reluctance to employ individual women as part of all male crews, and also helps to make the industry more attractive to women).

The applicant has already completed the provision of a successful HPR programme, the Northland College Pine Project, in which 16 male rangatahi NEET undertook forestry training while employed in site preparation and replanting of 30ha of pine in the production forest of the Northland College Farm in Kaikohe. At the completion of the project in September 2018 all 16 participants had completed training, attained the Level 2 NZ Certificate Forestry qualification, passed their drug tests and gone into employment. In 2019, ^{Comm} were still in full-time employment, including ^{Com} who had been promoted to Crew Boss and one who had started his own crew. One had returned to high school with the intention of going on to study engineering.

The applicant's second HPR funded project, Eco Toa in South Hokianga, began in March 2019 and all 15 participants (male rangatahi NEET aged 16-24) remain engaged. Wahine Toa draws on the Eco Toa model.

The programme involves:

- 8 weeks of training (First Aid, L2 NZ Certificate in Forest Industry Foundation Skills, soft skills, fitness)
- 12 weeks of work experience (predator and weed control, track clearing and construction, riparian planting, nursery work, chainsaw operation, commercial forestry)

- Transition to full time employment in commercial forestry planting or apprenticeship.

The applicant has considerable experience in working with rangatahi NEET who are farthest from employment. His success has been partly attributable to providing intensive pastoral care to support participants' ongoing engagement with the programme. This will include transport to and from work, meals, access to support services, and working closely with participants and their whānau to address the numerous challenges faced during the programme (for example family violence, addiction, mental health issues).

In the face of the difficulty in attracting rangatahi to the forestry sector, the applicant's experience also demonstrates that paying wages is a successful incentive for commitment to the programme. The applicant is seeking wage subsidies from HPR to pay participants at first the training wage and then the minimum wage.

Johnson Contractors Ltd through their RecruitMeNZ Limited arm and existing industry relationships, intend to continue to employ rangatahi and support their ongoing progression in the forestry industry post project completion. Johnson Contractors Ltd has developed clear, sustainable employment opportunities that provide full time employment throughout the year, not subject to the seasonal nature of the industry.

If the Eco Toa and Wahine Toa programmes are successful, the applicant will work with Team Government in Northland to develop a sustainable long-term funding model. RecruitMe NZ Ltd already has a Memorandum of Understanding with NorthTec – one option is to explore long term funding options through TEC.

	Response	PDU (TAM) Statement regarding achievability of target
Number of people expected to be targeted by the	Contin participants for 5 months	

project/activity annually:		
Number of people expected to attain employment as a result of the project/activity:	Comm	All participants in provider's earlier courses attained initial employment and the majority are in sustained employment
High level outcomes sought by the project/activity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply of skilled, trained employees to address labour shortage in forestry industry Sustained employment for local people, including those farthest from employment 	
Detail of who else is involved in funding the project/activity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comm: funding will cover the cost of L2 NZ Certificate in Forest Industry Foundation Skills 	
PGF Skills & Employment criteria that this proposal supports		
Te Ara Mahi Criteria	Assessment Commentary	Met (Y /N/Partial)
Link with fund and government outcomes – delivers benefit to communities		
Acts as a catalyst for improving productivity potential in the region (s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This programme will provide unemployed rangatahi with life and employment skills to enable them to undertake sustained employment thus improving productivity within the region. The provider is linked to sustainable employment opportunities that provide full-time employment throughout the year. 	Yes
Aligns with relevant regional economic and employment plans and priorities, including any Māori development plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and employment are a regional priority. Will support Reconnecting Northland's purpose: "seeks to enable a mutual interdependence based upon a healthy, natural environment that provides regenerative and sustainable livelihoods for its human inhabitants". 	Yes
Demonstrates potential to meet the current or future labour market skill needs of the region, including those resulting from PGF Tier 2 and 3 investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing female participation in the forestry sector will help to address industry labour shortages This programme focuses on forestry and ecological restoration which are both labour demands within the Northland region. This will include demand from the 1BT investments. 	Yes
Reduces the rates of people not in employment, education and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants in the programme will be rangatahi who are NEET. Most participants will be Māori. 	Yes

training, with an emphasis on Māori		
Increases local employment and earning potential, by supporting local people into local jobs, with an emphasis on sustainable employment outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Johnson Contractors Ltd has developed clear, sustainable employment opportunities that provide full time employment throughout the year, not subject to the seasonal nature of the industry. The project provides local rangatahi with work skills and links to local employment opportunities. 	Yes
Additionality – adds value by building on what is already there		
Addresses a gap in current service provision e.g. does not cover activities that are already funded for (unless funding is to up-scale or re-start, existing projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the first training programme specifically designed to employ women in the forestry sector. 	Yes
Demonstrates why third party funding, including other government agencies, cannot be used to address the current gap in service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project provides more intensive support and longer paid work experience than programmes provided by MSD. Participants may also include non-beneficiaries. The Level 2 NZ Certificate in Forest Industry Foundation Skills is fully funded by <small>Commitc</small> (via <small>Commercial Informall</small>) but <small>Commitc</small> funding is not available for the other training components of the programme. 	Yes
Demonstrates awareness of and ability to connect to other services/initiatives that are complementary to the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project is complementary to another HPR projects in the region and is linked to agency services in the area. 	Yes
Connected to regional stakeholders and frameworks		
Has support and input, where applicable, from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local; industry, employers, community groups and employment bodies/governance mechanisms central and local government agencies iwi and other Māori governance mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provider has strong connections with local hapu and community in the South Hokianga area - including on the He Ripo Kau project: a large-landscape initiative involving a range of hapū, marae, community groups, agencies, research institutes and education providers working in the greater Hokianga region. Has the support of MSD, DOC and Northland Regional Council. 	Yes
Governance, risk management and project execution		
Has robust project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As RecruitMe has previously held contracts with He 	Yes

and governance systems planned or in place	Poutama Rangatahi and MSD, we are aware of their good robust project methodology and governance processes backing this company	
Demonstrates the capacity and technical capabilities to effectively implement the initiative e.g. has experience in building local capacity, lifting work readiness and knowledge of the local labour market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme has been designed by Jack Johnson based on 18 years of experience in running training programmes of this kind. RecruitMe NZ Ltd has been running training programmes in partnership with MSD, MPI and MBIE since 2016. 	Yes
Risk management approach outlined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach based on successful model used in earlier projects 	Yes
Future ownership / operational management identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will managed by Johnson Contractors. However it will be subject to ongoing Evaluation and Monitoring by MBIE and managed though an Outcomes Based contract. 	Yes

The purpose of this briefing is to consider recommending PGF funds for the HPR Eco Toa project

Regional Governance Group View:

The Northland Skills and Employment Strategy Governance Group has reviewed and endorsed the application. The group has also expressed an interest in supporting the applicant to develop a longer term sustainable funding model for the scheme if the pilots of Eco Toa and Wahine Toa are successful.

Risks and Issues:

Include where applicable:

- Eco Toa was launched as an HPR funded scheme by the Minister of Employment on 25 March 2019.*
- A Press Release and advice will be prepared with PDU Comms if this application is successful.*
- MPI has an interest in this project as it is forestry related.*
- There are no dependencies with other related projects.*

Eligibility points of note:

- Due diligence:- Full due diligence has been completed and no issues identifies*
- Conflict(s) of interest:- No conflict of interest is evident noting that full due diligence will inform this item further.*
- Illegal Activity:- Based on the application information provided and feedback from other agencies there is no indication that the applicant or project has been involved in, or associated with illegal activity.*
- Alignment with Regional development plans:- Is aligned with Northland's regional development plan*
- Commercial funding availability: Given the nature of the project which is to provide unemployed rangatahi with life and work skills access to commercial funding is not considered a feasible option.*

Consultation undertaken or implications:

Legal	N/A	HR	N/A	Finance	N/A	MBIE policy	N/A	Other	
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Consultation has been undertaken with regional agencies in Northland.	
Supporting proposal:	Yes
Appendices:	Yes - Applications and supporting letters are as annexes
Sponsor(s):	N/A
Manager/Author of paper:	Stephen Ruddell/Hilary Pearse

PROACTIVELY RELEASED