

# Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund Call for Proposals and Scoring Guide

2025 Investment Round



## **Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Hīkina Whakatutuki – Lifting to make successful**

MBIE develops and delivers policy, services, advice and regulation to support economic growth and the prosperity and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

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Information, examples and answers to your questions about the topics covered here can be found on our website: [www.mbie.govt.nz](http://www.mbie.govt.nz).

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# Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund 2025 Call for Proposals

We are inviting proposals that seek to explore ways in which scientific research and its development and application can benefit individuals, whānau, Māori communities and Māori organisations.

This Call for Proposals contains the same information published on our webpages. The web pages will always contain the correct and most up to date information. Any changes will get communicated by stakeholder alerts and published on the web pages. No updates will be available in PDF.

## About this opportunity

We fund Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund projects through two investment schemes – Connect Scheme and Placement Scheme.

The aims of the Fund are to:

- strengthen capability, capacity, skills and networks between Māori and the science, innovation and technology system, and
- increase understanding of how scientific research\* can contribute to the aspirations of Māori organisations and deliver benefit for New Zealand.

\*Science definition: Science is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence.

This Call for Proposals provides you with information on how to apply to the Fund, how your application will be assessed, what happens if your application is successful, and how to contact us for assistance with the application process. Please read the [Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga 2025 Investment Plan](#) and the [Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga web pages](#) for information on the Investment aims, objectives, and descriptions of both the Connect and Placement Schemes.

## What funding is available

Approximately \$2.0 million (excluding GST) is available to fund successful new proposals in the Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund 2025 investment round.

The total funding available is \$4.0 million (excluding GST) per year with the remaining approximate \$2.0 million (excluding GST) per year being allocated to existing contracts from the Fund's previous investment rounds.

The work programme term for both Connect and Placement schemes is up to two years. For a project with a work programme of:

- up to one year in length, the maximum funding per successful proposal is \$150,000 (excluding GST)

- between one and two years, the maximum funding per successful proposal is \$250,000 (excluding GST). It is not a requirement to apply for the full funding available or the full two-year project term.

Project costs must be solely and directly related to the project work programme. Funding can be used to cover costs towards the work programme development, delivery, and operating costs (including travel). Capital expenditure is not funded.

## Who can apply for funding?

For a proposal to be considered for assessment for either the Connect Scheme or Placement Scheme, it must meet all the eligibility criteria set out below. Proposals that we consider do not meet these criteria will be declined for funding on eligibility grounds.

To be eligible for funding, proposals must:

1. Be made by a New Zealand based single legal entity that is a Māori organisation, Research organisation or individual researcher.

A **Māori organisation** is defined as an organisation that identifies itself as Māori and uses (or wishes to use) science, innovation and technology or related activities.

A **Research organisation** is defined as an organisation that has the internal capability to carry out science, innovation and technology or related activities. Government departments (as defined in Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act 2020) are not considered to be Research organisations and are not eligible to apply for this funding.

An **individual researcher** is defined as a person operating on his or her own, and is not employed by a Research organisation, with the capability to carry out science, innovation and technology or related activities.

2. Include both a Research organisation or individual researcher and a Māori organisation, with one or the other taking the lead as Contracting organisation and the other as Partner organisation.

A relationship must not be solely between the applicant and an organisation that is either a parent entity, subsidiary, or co-subsidiary of another organisation; or between departments within a single organisation (*for example, a tertiary institution*).

3. Not be for activities for the same purpose already funded by any government agency.
4. Not include any full-time tertiary students or school students.

Proposals with work programme activities that are eligible for funding from the Ministry of Education, are a poor fit for Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund.

5. Be for activities the majority of which are to be undertaken in New Zealand, unless MBIE considers there are compelling reasons to consider the proposal.

If the majority of the work programme will not be carried out in New Zealand, then explain in your proposal the reasons for this and why they are compelling. If a work programme is to have significant linkages with indigenous knowledge practitioners in other countries, demonstrate how this will be of benefit to New Zealand.

6. Not benefit a Russian state institution (including but not limited to support for Russian military or security activity) or an organisation outside government that may be perceived as contributing to the war effort.

- Be submitted in Pītau - MBIE's Investment Management System and meet any applicable timing, formatting, content, or other administrative requirements.

#### Placement or Connect Scheme

- Be for activities that fit one of the two schemes, and the requirements of one of the two schemes as set out in the Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund Investment Plan. For the Placement Scheme, a proposal must name the individual(s) who will be the placement person(s).

#### Vision Mātauranga theme(s)

- Address one or more Vision Mātauranga themes, and not solely address hauora/health.

The MBIE-led investments outlined in the Investment Plan and the Health Research Council (HRC) investments are designed to complement each other. To avoid duplication with the investments made by the HRC, MBIE does not provide funding for programmes exclusively relevant to the health/hauora area. Proposals where hauora improvements are part of a much broader suite of outcomes will be considered.

#### Co-development Letter

If you submit an application, you will need to upload a co-development letter. This letter needs to state that the work programme has been co-developed by both parties and that it has been signed by both the Contracting organisation and the Partner organisation(s).

## The application and assessment process

This section outlines the:

- key dates
- key reference documents and content
- application process
- assessment and decision-making process
- contracting and reporting requirements

## Key Dates

Key Activity	Dates
Proposal submission period	28 August 2024 until 12 noon, 16 October 2024
Information webinar ( <a href="#">register here</a> )	10am 18 September 2024
Assessment Panel members published	By 29 September 2024
We check all proposals against the eligibility criteria	October 2024
Assessment Panel Briefing	October 2024
Proposals assigned to Assessors	November 2024
Assessment of proposals by the assessment panel	November – December 2024
Assessments and scores recorded in Pītau	12 noon, 13 December 2024

Assessment Panel meeting	19-20 February 2025
Feedback to Applicants	March 2025
Investment funding decisions announced	March 2025
Contracts begin	June 2025

Dates are subject to change. We will notify all date changes by email. To be added to the email notification list, [subscribe](#) to updates.

## Key documents and content

When developing your application, we encourage you to consult the following key reference documents:

- [The Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga 2025 Investment Plan](#) for the fund investment objectives and outcomes
- The [Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga web pages](#)
- The [Vision Mātauranga policy](#) outlines the Government's policy framework that aims to unlock the innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources, and people to assist New Zealanders to create a better future.
- [Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga 2025 Proposal Template](#)
- [Assessment and scoring guide Te Pūnaha Hihiko Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund 2025](#)
- [Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund General Funding Agreement Contract Template 2025](#)
- [Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Combined Progress and Final Reporting Template](#)

## Application process

Applicants are required to complete their proposals in Pītau our Investment Management System a secure online portal. To help you prepare your proposal we've provided a proposal template.

1. Proposals are entered and submitted in Pītau. If you do not have a login, contact your Research Office to get one, or if you don't have a Research Office you can [request access](#). Before developing your proposal, you are encouraged to consider the eligibility criteria, the assessment criteria, and the terms and conditions relating to this Call for Proposals.
2. The proposal template provides guidance on how to prepare your proposal and the information you are required to provide. We recommend you use the proposal template provided to draft the required information in a word processor of your choice and then when ready to submit, copy and paste the necessary segments into the appropriate Pītau fields and upload your supporting documentation where directed.
3. MBIE staff will be able to assist you with accessing Pītau and providing guidance about how to go about entering content.
4. The information in your proposal is used for assessment and forms the basis of the contract for successful projects.
5. Proposals submitted in te reo Māori are welcomed. The assessment of proposals may take place in English. Applicants may choose to provide a translation of their proposal or rely on MBIE to commission a translation without further recourse to the Applicant. The choice of language will not influence assessment outcomes. Translations must be upload into Pītau, and any translations must be consistent with the original te reo Māori version.

# Assessment process

The following assessment process applies:

1. Applicants submit a funding proposal.
2. MBIE will check all proposals against the eligibility criteria.
3. Assessors will accept/decline assigned eligible proposals and declare any conflicts of interest.
4. All eligible proposals are assessed by four independent assessment panel members against the assessment criteria and recorded in Pītau.
5. The Assessment Panel meet and discuss the proposals and reach a consensus on scores, feedback comments, and recommendations which will inform the Panel Chair's report.
6. The Panel Chair provides a report that includes funding recommendations to the Deputy Secretary, Labour, Science and Enterprise.

If you are submitting a proposal, check the list of Assessment Panel members below (names will be published by 29 September 2024) for any potential conflicts of interest. If you identify an actual, potential, or perceived direct or indirect conflict of interest, you must notify us before the application closing date by emailing [vmcf@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:vmcf@mbie.govt.nz) with the details for further discussion.

Conflicts of interest may occur on two different levels:

1. A direct conflict of interest, where an Assessor is:
  - directly involved with a proposal (as a participant, manager, mentor, or partner) or has a close personal relationship with the applicant, for example, family members
  - a collaborator or in some other way involved with an applicant's proposal.
2. An indirect conflict of interest, where an Assessor:
  - is employed by an organisation involved in a proposal but is not part of the applicant's proposal
  - has a personal and/or professional relationship with one of the applicants, for example, an acquaintance
  - is assessing a proposal under discussion that may compete with their business interests.

A close personal relationship is generally considered in relatively narrow terms, for example, that of a direct relationship (spouse/partner, sibling, dependent). Iwi or hapū affiliation would not normally be considered a direct conflict of interest.

## Assessment Panel members

A list of Assessment Panel members will be published by 29 September 2024.

## Assessment criteria

The Assessment Panel members will assess Connect and Placement Scheme proposals on each of the criteria below and score them from 1 (Low quality) to 7 (High quality).

Each criterion has a 25% weighting.



## Excellence

Investment in Excellence will help the science, innovation and technology system develop, retain, and attract talented individuals, develop people and organisations to benefit from new knowledge, increase relevant skill levels to carry out Vision Mātauranga relevant research.

### Development of People, Relationships, and Skills (25%)

**Key Question:** To what extent are longer-term skills, capability, networks, relationships, and research opportunities likely to emerge and be sustained from the project?

### Ability to Deliver (25%)

**Key Question:** What is the likelihood that the proposed outputs of the project will be achieved?

## Impact

The Fund seeks Impact through programmes of work that explore the ways in which scientific research and its development and application can benefit individuals, whānau, Māori communities and Māori organisations.

### Vision Mātauranga Outcomes (25%)

**Key Question:** To what extent does the project support the Vision Mātauranga policy and support unlocking the science, innovation and technology potential of Māori knowledge, resources, and people for the benefit of Aotearoa New Zealand?

### Benefits to Science, Innovation and Technology (25%)

**Key Question:** Describe how will the increased capability, capacity, skills and networks benefit the science, innovation and technology system, and the expected impacts of the project post-contract?

For more information on how Assessors will assess and score proposals see the Assessment and scoring guide pages

## Applicant feedback

Following eligibility checks, all applicants will be notified whether they were eligible or not. If applicants are not eligible, we will let you know the reasons why.

After the full assessment process has been completed, all applicants will receive written notification and feedback about their applications. Feedback will be based on information gathered from assessment panel members about the main strengths and weaknesses of their proposals.

## Funding decisions

MBIE's Deputy Secretary, Labour, Science and Enterprise will make the final investment decision based on recommendations from the Panel Chair's report, and may:

- set pre-contractual conditions which must be met before the investment is contracted
- set special conditions in addition to the general terms and conditions set out in the Fund's Funding Contract
- vary the contract title (in consultation with the applicant)
- vary the proposed term of the project
- vary the funding allocated from that proposed

- require the proposed project plan be negotiated to MBIE’s satisfaction to reflect the changed funding
- take into account prior performance in previous VMCF Funding Contracts. Where an applicant is recommended to be funded but has an outstanding reporting requirement, or unmet VMCF contractual obligations, at the time of contracting, we may withhold the funding contract until such a time as previous VMCF contractual obligations are fulfilled. Please note that the new contract start date could be delayed where earlier VMCF contractual obligations are unfulfilled.

We will advise the proposal’s Application Administrator of the funding decisions in March 2025. The successful applicants will be published on our [Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund webpages](#) and announced via a press release, or announced by the Ministers for Science, Innovation and Technology and Māori Development.

## The contracting process

Successful applicants will enter into a Funding Contract with us (subject to any pre-contractual conditions being met).

This agreement must be signed and returned to us within one month of receipt.

The terms and conditions of the Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund Funding Contract will apply to the provision of funding agreed between us and the contracting organisation. By submitting a proposal, you are agreeing to the terms and conditions of the Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund Funding Contract. A sample Funding Contract is available in our Key documents and content section above.

## Payment

The contract holder must manage the funding to ensure delivery of the contracted work programme and adhere to any reporting requirements. Subject to specific contract conditions, MBIE funding will be provided as follows:

- 50% at the start of the work programme,
- 40% at the mid-point (after submission of a progress report to our satisfaction), and
- 10% on completion of the work programme (after submission of a final report to our satisfaction). The following table provides an overview of the contract reporting requirements for contracts.

## Reporting and monitoring

The following table provides an overview of the contract reporting requirements for contracts.

Required reporting	Due date	Reporting period
Progress report	One month before the mid-point of the work programme or as otherwise agreed with us	From the start date of the work programme to the last day of the month before the report is due
Final report	No later than one month after the end date of the work programme	From the start date of the work programme to the end date of the programme

These reports should be prepared jointly and include information provided from both the contract holder and Partner organisation(s), including a co-development letter from the Partner organisation(s) to confirm that the report has been prepared in conjunction with that organisation and that the information contained in the letter is accurate.

The progress report should include information on the status and progress towards delivering on the work programme as contracted.

The final report should also include information on:

- the status and progress towards delivering on the Deliverables and Tasks as contracted
- co-funding contributions (if applicable)
- mentoring arrangements (for Placement Scheme only)
- key achievements
- emerging risks and what is being done to address them
- public statement
- an assessment of whether or not the work programme has or will lead to further Vision Mātauranga opportunities, the project's success in building skills and networks, and the effectiveness of the overall work programme.

Reports will be submitted in Pītau and evaluated by us.

## Contact

Email: Application queries: [vmcf@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:vmcf@mbie.govt.nz)

Pītau queries: [imssupport@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:imssupport@mbie.govt.nz)

Phone: 0800 693 778 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm)

You can also [subscribe](#) to our Alert e-newsletter.

# Assessment and scoring guide Te Pūnaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund 2025

Your proposal will be assessed using the scoring tables.

The Fund focuses on achieving Excellence and Impact by investing in the development of people and organisations with the skills and capacity to develop high quality research programmes that are relevant to implementing the Vision Mātauranga policy.

Assessors will consider how the proposal addresses the following questions.

## Excellence

Investment through the Fund will help the science, innovation and technology system develop, retain, and attract talented individuals, develop people and organisations to benefit from new knowledge, increase relevant skill levels to carry out Vision Mātauranga relevant research.

## Development of People, Relationships, and Skills

(25% Weighting)

**Key Question:** To what extent are longer-term skills, capability, networks, relationships, and research opportunities likely to emerge and be sustained from the proposed project?

When assessing this question, Assessors will consider:

- Will the project build scientific research capability, networks, and relationships. For example, the formation of a new partnership between a Māori organisation and a Research organisation?
- Will the project go beyond 'business as usual' for the organisations involved?
- To what extent will the project substantially develop capability and skill of the individuals involved?
- Will this partnership lead to a long-term collaboration?

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Insufficient Not relevant No information Missing	No relevant information has been provided in the proposal. For example, the proposal does not outline any plans to develop skills or capability.

2	Vague Unclear Unlikely Dubious Little relevance	The information provided in the proposal is unclear or not supported. For example, plans to develop skills are vague or unlikely.
3	Limited Minimum - acceptable level Uncertainty Lacks detail	Some useful information is provided, however significant gaps and lack of detail remain. For example, plans to develop skills have been outlined but there is some uncertainty about their effectiveness.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Adequate Suitable	Solid information is provided, however there is room for further information and evidence to improve the proposal. For example, plans to develop skills are adequate.
5	Significant Clear Multiple High level Robust	Clear, succinct information is provided, delivering a solid proposal with relevant evidence. For example, plans to develop skills are well outlined and robust.
6	Certain Enduring Effective Comprehensive Strong Experience	Significant information is provided and is backed up by relevant and effective evidence. For example, it is certain that skills will be developed, and the plans are comprehensive.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Detailed Impressive	The proposal is exemplary, excellent, comprehensive, and well explained and detailed in all respects. For example, excellent skills will be developed and will provide a step-change.

## Ability to Deliver

(25% Weighting)

**Key Question:** What is the likelihood that the proposed outputs of the project will be achieved?

When assessing this question, Assessors will consider:

- Does the team have the appropriate mandate to conduct this work?
- Are all involved parties and the work programme appropriately resourced and supported, including management, mentoring and support arrangements?
- Will the plan for carrying out the proposed work programme achieve the intended outcomes and capability development?

- How does the calibre, experience, and skills of the team relate to the subject area(s) proposed for the work programme?
- Have challenges to delivery been identified and mitigated?

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Insufficient Not relevant No information Missing	No relevant information has been provided. For example, there's no information about the work programme. Significant challenges in the project have not been identified or addressed.
2	Vague Unclear Unlikely Dubious Little relevance	The information provided is unclear or not supported. For example, work programme details are missing or unclear. There are challenges in the project that have not been identified or addressed.
3	Limited Minimum - acceptable level Uncertainty Lacks detail	Some useful information is provided, however significant gaps and lack of detail remain. For example, work programme details are provided. There's some uncertainty around challenges and mitigations.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Adequate Suitable	Solid information is provided, however there's room for further information and evidence. For example, work programme details are sufficient but further explanation could be provided. Identification of challenges and mitigations are adequate.
5	Significant Clear Multiple High level Robust	Clear, succinct information is provided, with relevant evidence. For example, the work programme is well developed. Key challenges and mitigations are clearly identified.
6	Certain Enduring Effective Comprehensive Strong Experience	Significant information is provided and backed up by relevant and effective evidence. For example, the project plan is comprehensive and addresses challenges well.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Detailed Impressive	The proposal is exemplary and detailed in all respects. For example, the work programme is impressive and will clearly achieve its intended outcomes. Identification of challenges and mitigation is excellent.

# Impact

The Fund seeks programmes of work that explore the ways in which scientific research and its development and application can benefit individuals, whānau, Māori communities and Māori organisations.

## Vision Mātauranga Outcomes

(25% Weighting)

**Key Question:** To what extent does the project support the Vision Mātauranga policy and support unlocking the science, innovation and technology potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people for the benefit of Aotearoa New Zealand?

When assessing this question, Assessors will consider:

- Do the expected benefits align with the aspirations of the Māori organisation?
- Will the capability and leadership of Māori researchers be developed?
- Will the project outcomes be disseminated to participating or wider Māori groups?
- How does the project address the Vision Mātauranga theme(s) selected?
- Will the project develop and deliver innovative initiatives that encourage Māori organisations and the scientific research community to engage effectively to deliver benefit to Aotearoa New Zealand?

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Insufficient Not relevant No information Missing	No relevant information has been provided in the proposal. For example, there is insufficient information to assess the feasibility, or the project does not deliver Vision Mātauranga outcomes.
2	Vague Unclear Unlikely Dubious Little relevance	The information provided in the proposal is unclear or not supported. For example, the work programme is unlikely to deliver Vision Mātauranga outcomes.
3	Limited Minimum - acceptable level Uncertainty Lacks detail	Some useful information is provided, however significant gaps and lack of detail remain. For example, the work programme will deliver limited Vision Mātauranga outcomes.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Adequate Suitable	Solid information is provided, however there is room for further information and evidence to improve the proposal. For example, the work programme will deliver adequate Vision Mātauranga outcomes.

5	Significant Clear Multiple High level Robust	Clear, succinct information is provided, delivering a solid proposal with relevant evidence.  For example, the work programme will deliver clear Vision Mātauranga outcomes.
6	Certain Enduring Effective Comprehensive Strong Experience	Comprehensive information is provided. The proposal may deliver enduring impacts and is backed up by relevant and effective evidence.  For example, the work programme is certain to deliver Vision Mātauranga outcomes.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Detailed Impressive	Excellent information is provided, delivering an exemplary proposal. A high level of confidence/ certainty exists that this proposal will successfully deliver on its outcomes.  For example, the work programme will deliver excellent Vision Mātauranga outcomes that are substantial and represent a step-change.

## Benefits to Science, Innovation and Technology

### (25% Weighting)

**Key Question:** How will the increased capability, capacity, skills and networks benefit the science, innovation and technology (SI&T) sector, and what are the expected impacts of the project post contract? When assessing this question, Assessors will consider:

- How will the project increase skills, capacity, capability, and networks between Māori and the science, innovation and technology system to deliver benefit to Aotearoa New Zealand?
- Does your project leverage any previously funded research?
- Will the project increase understanding of how science, innovation and technology can contribute to the aspirations of Māori organisations?
- Will the project identify and support future opportunities to participate in science, innovation and technology relevant Vision Mātauranga outcomes?
- Does the proposal describe the expected long-term impacts of this research, i.e., 1, 2, 5 years post-contract.

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Insufficient Not relevant No information Missing	No relevant information has been provided.  For example, insufficient information is provided, or no benefits to SI&T will be achieved.



2	Vague Unclear Unlikely Dubious Little relevance	The information provided is unclear or not supported. For example, benefits to SI&T are unclear or unlikely.
3	Limited Minimum - acceptable level Uncertainty Lacks detail	Some useful information is provided, however significant gaps and lack of detail remain. For example, benefits to SI&T are uncertain or limited.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Adequate Suitable	Solid information is provided, however there is room for further information and evidence to improve the proposal. For example, benefits to SI&T are adequate.
5	Significant Clear Multiple High level Robust	Clear, succinct information is provided, delivering a solid proposal with relevant evidence. For example, benefits to SI&T are adequate.
6	Certain Enduring Effective Comprehensive Strong Experience	Comprehensive information is provided. The proposal may deliver enduring impacts and is backed up by relevant and effective evidence. For example, benefits to SI&T are certain and will be enduring.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Detailed Impressive	Excellent information is provided, delivering an exemplary proposal. A high level of confidence/ certainty exists that this proposal will successfully deliver on its outcomes. For example, benefits to SI&T are excellent and will result in a step-change.