

He Ara Whakahiriko Capability Fund 2027 Webinar– Summary of Questions and Answers

1. What is the purpose of the He Ara Whakahiriko Capability Fund?

A: The fund supports projects that grow Māori capability in science, innovation and technology, and deliver economic outcomes for the Māori economy and New Zealand.

2. How is the Māori economy defined?

A: In line with the Investment Plan, the Māori economy is characterised by its potential to drive economic growth through science, innovation and technology (SI&T), by increasing Māori participation in SI&T, and by strengthening capability, capacity, skills, and partnerships between Māori and the research system. This includes supporting impact pathways that enable research commercialisation and developing skilled people and organisations to deliver economic, environmental, and intergenerational outcomes with clear economic benefits.

3. Does every proposal need to demonstrate an economic outcome?

A: Yes. All proposals must demonstrate a clear pathway to economic outcomes. This may include, but it is not limited to, commercialisation, efficiency gains, cost savings, or environmental outcomes with clear economic benefits.

4. Does my programme need to directly benefit the Māori economy to be eligible?

A: No. If the applicant or partner organisation (for Rangapū Rangahau) meets the definition of a Māori-facing organisation, the proposal does not need to focus only on the Māori economy. It should aim to contribute in some way to the New Zealand economy.

5. Can environmental projects be funded?

A: Yes. Environmental projects are eligible, but they must clearly demonstrate an economic benefit or pathway to economic outcomes.

6. What is the difference between Ara Whaihua and Rangapū Rangahau?

A: Ara Whaihua supports the translation of existing or new science into impact and economic outcomes. Rangapū Rangahau supports research partnerships between Māori-facing organisations and research organisations to undertake research and build capability.

7. What is a Māori-facing organisation?

A: A Māori-facing Organisation means any organisation that has a clearly identified Māori individual or group(s) who play a central role in shaping, guiding, and delivering the proposed work. The definition is provided in our Calls for Proposals.

8. What level of involvement is required for a Māori-facing organisation?

A. The Māori individual(s) or group(s) must play a central role in shaping, guiding, and delivering the proposed work.

9. Can we apply for both funds?

A: Yes. You can apply for both funds if you meet the eligibility criteria for each and submit separate proposals which have clearly distinct work programmes.

10. Can the same organisation apply for multiple projects as the lead?

A: Yes. An organisation can lead multiple applications as long as each one meets the eligibility criteria and aligns with the fund's goals. Each proposal will be assessed on its merit.

11. Do the Ara Whaihua and Rangapū Rangahau funds support educational or training projects?

A: No. Projects that focus mainly on educational or training outcomes are not a good fit for this fund.

12. How important is it to clearly describe the science in the proposal?

A: As the focus of this Fund is to grow Māori capability in science, innovation and technology, and deliver economic outcomes for the Māori economy and New Zealand it is very important. Proposals must clearly describe the underpinning science and how it contributes to outcomes and impact.

13. Do I need to demonstrate that my research is novel?

A: Yes. Applicants should clearly explain what is new or innovative about their work and how it differs from existing research (Rangapū Rangahau) or research translation (Ara Whaihua).

14. Should projected outcomes be ambitious?

A: Proposals should be realistic and proportionate to investment available. Overstating outcomes may reduce assessor confidence in delivery.

15. Why is a ballot used in the assessment process?

A: A ballot may be used if there are more eligible and fundable proposals than can be practically assessed. It is a transparent process to manage volume and ensure fairness.

16. Is a project already in the commercialisation phase eligible for funding?

A: Ara Whaihua supports planning to reach investor readiness. If a project already has investment, it is unlikely to be eligible.

17. Can we include multiple partners or organisation in a proposal?

A: Yes, but only include partners who have a clear and active role in delivering the project. Including organisations that are not directly involved may weaken the proposal.

18. What does “co-developed” mean for Rangapū Rangahau proposals?

A: Proposals must be jointly developed between the research organisation and the Māori-facing organisation. Evidence of co-development must be provided through a co-development letter signed by both parties.

19. How detailed should roles and funding allocation be in partnership proposals?

A: Roles, contributions, and funding allocations must be clearly defined between partners to demonstrate capability, feasibility, and genuine collaboration.

20. Should I include as many partners as possible to strengthen my proposal?

A: No. Focus on partners who are directly contributing to the project. Including unnecessary parties may reduce clarity and weaken the application.

21. Can I rely on my organisation’s reputation or track record to support my proposal?

A: No. Proposals are assessed based on the information provided. Applicants should clearly demonstrate their capability and delivery plan within the proposal.

22. When should I request access to Pītau?

A: You should request access as early as possible. Late requests may not be processed before submission deadlines.

23. Who should be set up as the organisation administrator in Pitau?

A: An organisation administrator manages access and can submit proposals. It is recommended to have more than one administrator to reduce submission risk.

24. Who owns the intellectual property (IP) for funded projects?

A: Each project must have an IP management plan that follows MBIE's IP policy. MBIE does not claim ownership of your project's IP.

25. How is mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) protected?

A: Projects must include an IP management plan that aligns with MBIE's policy and considers mātauranga Māori rights and data sovereignty where relevant.

26. Do project titles in Te Reo Māori need to be translated into English?

A: Yes. Please provide English translations for all project titles. The titles should also clearly indicate what the project is about.

27. How does Moko Kauri support proposal development?

A: Moko Kauri helps applicants understand eligibility, align with fund objectives, and navigate the application process. They provide guidance and support but do not review or provide feedback on proposal content.