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Project 4820 New Zealand Research Information System SaaS Benefits Realisation Plan



Document control

Version history

Date	Version	Author	Description of change
16/10/2025	0.1	Privacy of natural	Create first draft

Endorsed by

This document has been endorsed by:

Name	Role	Version	Date	Signature
Privacy of natural persons	Benefit Owner			
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Approved by

This document has been approved by:

Name	Role	Version	Date	Signature
Danette Olsen	Project Sponsor			
Privacy of natural persons	Business Owner			



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Benefit Summary

Benefit #	Benefit Type
Project Name	New Zealand Research Information System SaaS
Project Number	4820
Programme name	NA
Project Sponsor	Danette Olsen (General Manager Science System Investment and Performance)
Business Owner	Privacy of natural persons Manager Service Design and Reporting)
Benefits Owner(s)	Manager Service Design and Reporting)
Agencies	MBIE and other public funders of science including the Tertiary Education Commission, Ministry of Primary Industries, Ministry of Health, Department of Conservation, Ministry for the Environment, Natural Hazards Commission, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, and others to be identified.

Executive Summary

The Government invests around \$1.4 billion in New Zealand's SI&T system. This system includes a wide range of funders, research performing entities, researchers, and end users of research. Information on funding, projects, resources, and outputs within this system is captured in diverse data sets maintained by its participants and is not available from a single source.

Currently, data around SI&T activities is collected and maintained by the various entities involved in funding and producing research. This information is often collected using differing data specifications, different technology and infrastructure, and there is no central source of data on the research being funded and delivered across our public SI&T system. Although most government funders make data available, it cannot be easily compared or aggregated. The information we have is often low-quality or incomplete and cannot be used to provide a holistic view of our research landscape. This makes it difficult to see what is happening on a system-wide basis and provide transparency over how public funding is used in the research sector, evaluate the effectiveness of policies and funding, and enhance the value of research for New Zealand.

In 2016 MBIE, Statistics New Zealand, The Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission jointly published the Research, Science and Innovation (RSI) Domain Plan. The aim of the Domain Plan was to achieve greater clarity and agreement on the main statistical and information priorities for the RSI sector. A number of actions were proposed, including the creation of a national research system to collect and store information from across the sector about the research being carried out in New Zealand.

A single source of information from all funders of research, and all research organisations receiving public funding is seen as a very valuable resource and is expected to support the following improvements across the sector:



- More efficient allocation of resources – Identifying gaps or overlaps in how SI&T is resourced will enable government to direct funding to meet New Zealand’s needs while reducing fragmentation, wastage, and duplication of effort across the system.
- Greater impact from our investments – Better data will show which parts of our system are functioning well, and which are not. This will allow policy to be better targeted, for example to increase investment in new technology, which will realise increased economic and commercialisation benefits for New Zealand.
- Increased accessibility and transparency – NZRIS will consolidate data in a single repository allowing a view of what research is being undertaken across New Zealand’s SI&T system. This will make public research more discoverable by innovative businesses, providing more opportunities for that research to be commercialised.
- Effective long-term planning – Research capability and infrastructure takes years to develop. A clear picture of our current capability will strengthen system alignment and reduce fragmentation by supporting government and organisations to effectively plan to fill gaps, leverage strengths, and grow opportunities without duplicating effort.

Additionally, NZRIS contributes to the All of Government Data Investment Plan by supporting the creation of infrastructure which will enable effective data management and reuse.

Internally, NZRIS links to Te Ara Amiorangi outcome five, supporting a Dynamic Business Environment Fostering Innovation and International Connections. It also addresses MBIE’s Data Strategy strategic improvement area three (unified data processes and tools) by allowing standardised practice and facilitating timely and appropriate data access.

MBIE began NZRIS as project 3325 and commissioned vendors to build a bespoke IT system for NZRIS as there was no commercial off-the-shelf solution available at that time. An initial IT system was completed in December 2022. Unfortunately, testing found that data did not process through the system correctly and that the system as delivered would not provide the required research data solution.

MBIE commissioned a technical review to identify the cause of these issues and propose how the system could be fixed. The review found that the IT system has overly complex architecture that focusses on technical rather than business need. MBIE has determined the need for NZRIS remains and has investigated an alternative approach to deliver NZRIS using commercial off the shelf IT solutions. This change is the focus of this project.

We have reviewed benefits developed in relation to the previous project (3325) and undertaken a benefits mapping exercise for project 4820. Two benefits have been identified, which are described below.

Critical success factors for benefits realisation include:

- Cultural
 - Open communication and ethical data use are essential to build transparency and trust to maintain confidence among key users and ensure use of NZRIS is embedded in the sector.
 - The system is robustly tested by the sector to provide confidence that it can correctly process data and that the information it provides to the public is accurate
- Strategic
 - Enough organisations are willing to submit data to NZRIS to provide a comprehensive view of New Zealand’s research, science, and innovation landscape



- NZRIS draws on international best practice to ensure the system is robust and future proof
- Organisational
 - Roles and responsibilities for operational staff, data provider and users are defined and accountability for smooth operation of the system
 - There is ongoing collaboration with research organisations, funders, and research communities to ensure there is update of NZRIS.
 - Organisations are supported to meet data standards and contribute effectively to NZRIS
- Process
 - Processes ensure data accuracy, consistency, and security, especially for sensitive or confidential information.
 - NZRIS is designed to evolve, with feedback loops and updates to maintain relevance and effectiveness
- Policy
 - Alignment with national data policies (e.g., Stats NZ standards) ensures consistency and trustworthiness.
 - Policies enable data sharing, protect intellectual property, and support innovation.



Benefits Table

The project Benefits are outlined in the table below. For additional information refer to Appendix A.

Benefit #	Benefit Type	Benefit Name	Benefit Description	Measure	Baseline Measure	Target Measure	Measure Date
1	Strategic	Supporting research impact	Enhance the impact of research by making information held on government funded research publicly available online	Estimated amount of public funding data covered	0	60	15/12/2027
				Number of NZRIS Data downloads	0	120 pa	15/12/2027
2	Efficiency / productivity	Enhanced understanding	Improved understanding of New Zealand's research and science system by creating a consolidated view of research information for government funded research	Number of grants reported to NZRIS	0	250 p.a.	15/12/2027
				Number of NZRIS website hits	0	12,000 pa	15/12/2027
				Number of data providers	0	Minimum of 3	30/9/2026



Benefit Ownership

The project Benefits and Measures and their owners are outlined in the table below. Each benefit should have one owner, and each measure should have one owner.

Benefit #	Benefit Name	Benefit Owner Name	Benefit Owner Substantive Position	Measure	Measure Owner Name
1	Supporting research impact	Privacy of natural persons	Manager, Service Design and Reporting	Estimated amount of public funding data covered	Privacy of natural persons
			Manager, Service Design and Reporting	Number of NZRIS Data downloads	
2	Enhanced understanding		Manager, Service Design and Reporting	Number of grants reported to NZRIS	
			Manager, Service Design and Reporting	Number of NZRIS website hits	
			Manager, Service Design and Reporting	Number of data providers	



Benefits Schedule

The project Benefits schedule is outlined in the table below.

Benefit #	Benefit Name	Target Measure	Baseline Measure & Date		Target Measure & Date
1	Supporting research impact	Estimated amount of public funding data covered	0 16/10/25	Target	60 15/12/2027
		Number of NZRIS Data downloads	0 16/10/25	Target	120 pa 15/12/2027
2	Enhanced understanding	Number of grants reported to NZRIS	0 16/10/25	Target	250 pa 15/12/2027
		Number of NZRIS website hits	0 16/10/25	Target	12,000 pa 15/12/2027
		Number of data providers	0 16/10/25	Target	Minimum of 3 30/09/2026



Benefits Realisation Activities

How will the benefits plan be managed?

The benefit plan will be managed by the assigned benefit owner, who is responsible for measuring and reporting actuals against the planned targets. Ongoing monitoring will ensure sustained value and capture any lessons for future initiatives.

Reviews

Reviews will be conducted six months from the approval of the business case, on completion of the project (go live) and annually thereafter.

Review #	Event review aligns with	Review Date
1	The first approved version of this plan is developed to support the initial business case.	17/11/2025
2	Six months from the date the initial business case was approved. The updated version will include updated schedule and measure information.	17/04/2026
3	Project completion (go live)	31/07/2026
4	Annual Review	31/7/2027

Assumptions

- Data providers will have capacity/capacity to prepare and provide data to NZRIS.
- Other agencies and research organisations will provide data to NZRIS and support its growth.

Critical success factors will be managed through:

- Robust engagement and meaningful inclusion of the sector in planning, testing and on-going stewardship of the system.
- Development of clear roles and responsibilities for NZRIS
- Early engagement with data providers and provision of support to prepare and submit their data
- Development of validation tools to improve data quality

Constraints

- Resourcing at data providers and MBIE to prepare, check and submit data.
- Tight budget for delivering initial NZRIS IT system.



Dependencies

- Seamless integration between Symplectic Elements and the public interface to ensure accurate and up-to-date information availability.
- Ability of data providers to submit data to NZRIS.
- Technology supports measurement of interaction with NZRIS
- Effective communication and collaboration between project teams, stakeholders, and IT support for seamless implementation.

Business Change Management

N/A.

Handover of Benefits Realisation

Benefit Owners are involved with project delivery

Post Closure Monitoring of Benefits

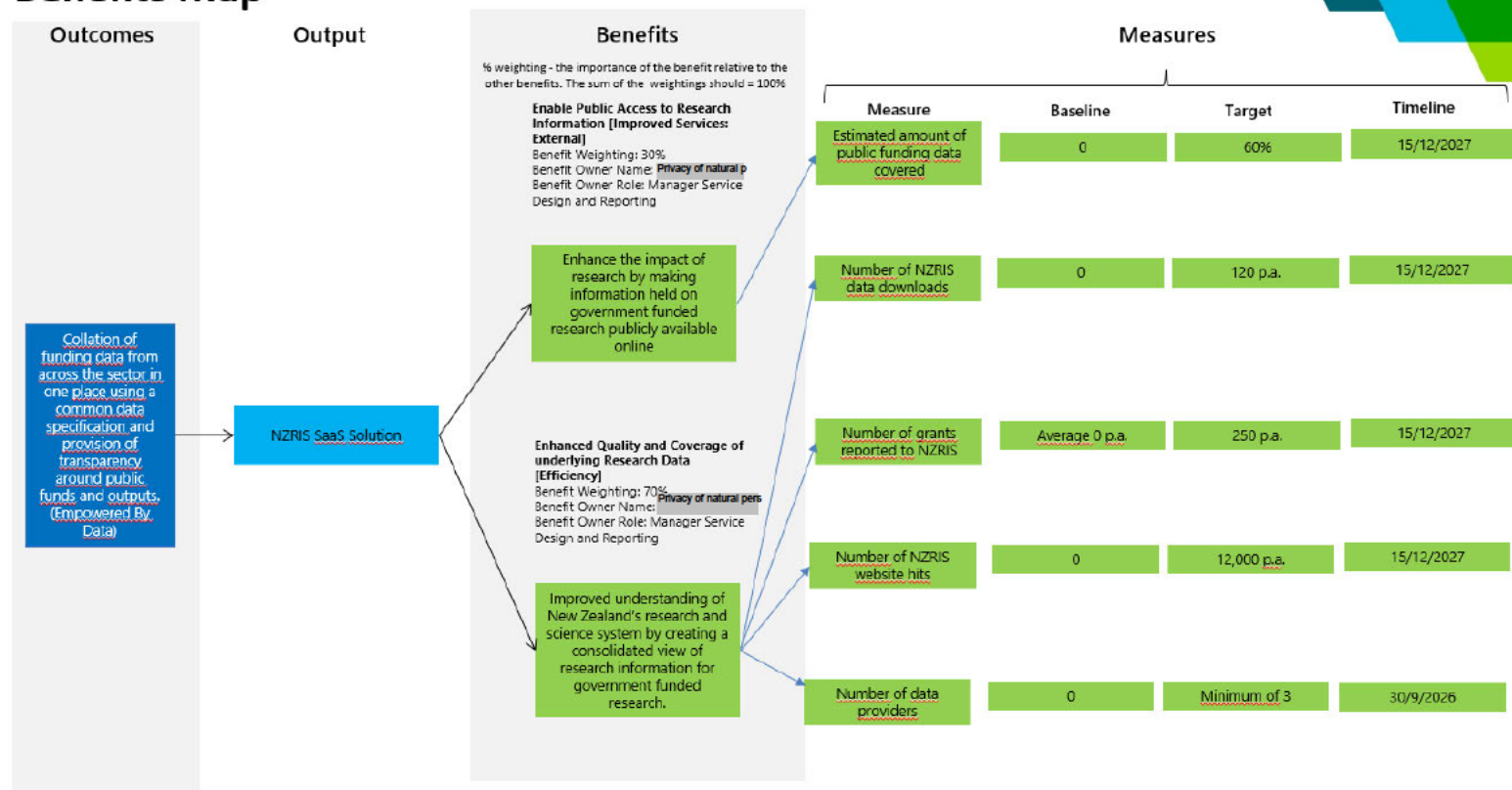
Benefits will be reviewed 12 months after completion of delivery. Variations will be raised with the PMO for further action.



Appendix A – Benefits Map

Document	Link to approved Benefits Map
Approved Benefits Map	Internal Links

Benefits Map



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