

Programmes Call for Proposals and Scoring Guidance -

Transition Research Fund 2027 Investment Round





**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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

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Programmes Call for Proposals – Transition Research Fund 2027 Investment Round

We are inviting proposals for the Transition Research Fund 2027 Programmes mechanism. The focus is on supporting larger, ambitious, multi-year research programmes that bring together collaborative, interdisciplinary teams to address complex challenges and deliver impact for New Zealand.

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 the Transition Research Fund 2027

The Transition Research Fund 2027 (TRF2027) is a new contestable fund established to support the transition to New Zealand's future science, innovation and technology investment system. It provides up to \$84.8 million (excluding GST) in annual funding distributed across 3 investment mechanisms: Talent Development, Projects and Programmes. TRF2027 aims to advance excellence, capability, and continuity across the research system during a period of change, supporting high quality foundational and applied research, across all disciplines aligned with National Pillar Priorities. TRF2027 is intended to operate as a single funding round and will apply to funding decisions announced in 2027.

TRF2027 operates within the strategic direction set by the Science Investment Plan. The Pillar Investment Plans sets out the priorities for each pillar. The Gazette Notice requires Research Funding New Zealand (RFNZ) to consider the Transition Research Fund Investment Plan 2027, Science Investment Plan, and Pillar Investment Plans when portfolio balancing for TRF2027. Applicants should read these documents together when developing their proposals.

The RFNZ Board will make funding decisions in accordance with the applicable Gazette Notices. MBIE will administer the application, assessment and contracting processes

About the Programmes mechanism

Programmes is one of the 3 investment mechanisms available through the TRF2027. It provides 5-year funding to support ambitious, excellent, and well-defined research programmes that address complex challenges, involve multiple partners and collaborations, grow specialist expertise, and are considered to have a high potential to positively transform New Zealand's future aligned with National Pillar Priorities.

The Programmes mechanism aims to:

- Support larger, ambitious, more complex, multi-year programmes that build collaborations and inter-disciplinary teams that drives impact for New Zealand.

- Support programmes that address complex challenges or opportunities that have a high potential to positively transform New Zealand's future aligned with national priorities.
- Embed and grow specialist expertise aligned to national priorities.

This Call for Proposals provides you with information on how to apply to the Programmes mechanism of TRF2027, including how your application will be assessed, what happens if your application is successful, and how to contact us for assistance with the application process.

The Key resources section contains links to all documents and web pages referenced throughout this Call for Proposals.

The funding available

Approximately \$31.7 million (excluding GST) in new annual funding is available through the Programmes mechanism for the TRF2027 investment round.

Programmes proposals may address opportunities under any of the 4 pillars. Where a proposal could align with more than one pillar, applicants must select the pillar to which their proposed research is most closely aligned to.

The table below sets out the indicative funding allocations (excluding GST) (portfolio targets) and anticipated number of contracts for each pillar.

	Primary Industries and Bioeconomy	Technology for Prosperity	Environmental Sustainability and Resilience	Healthy People and a Thriving Society	Total annual funding
Programmes (million)	\$10.6	\$11.2	\$8.2	\$1.6	\$31.7
Anticipated number of contracts	5	5	4	1	15

Investments made through the Programmes mechanism will have a duration of 5-years and a minimum contract value of \$1 million per annum (excluding GST).

Achieving portfolio targets

Portfolio targets are in place to help TRF2027 achieve its objectives, set the long-term direction and contribute to the pillar investment targets published in the Science Investment Plan.

The portfolio targets are:

- Underpinned by a fixed maximum total investment available within each pillar.
- Flexible, so that the Board has ability to change the proportion invested in each mechanism, depending on the number and quality of proposals received.
- Expressed in terms of the annual, not total, contract value.

Who can apply

For proposals to be eligible under the Programmes mechanism, they must:

- a. be made under an investment mechanism specified in the:
[2027 Transition Research Fund\(external link\) — Gazette Notice](#)
- b. align to one of the pillars, and to one of the pillar priorities listed as opportunities, as outlined in the Science Investment Plan
- c. be made by an applicant who is not in material breach of any Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) science funding contract and who does not have any outstanding remedial actions associated with any termination of any MBIE science funding contract
- d. be submitted in Pītau (MBIE's Investment Management System) and meet any applicable timing, formatting, content, or other administrative requirements set by MBIE
- e. not name a person as Principal Investigator for a Talent Development proposal who is named as Principal Investigator on another Talent Development proposal submitted for the 2027 Transition Research Fund Talent Development mechanism
- f. be made by a New Zealand-based Research Organisation or a New Zealand-based legal entity representing a New Zealand-based Research Organisation
- g. be designed so that the new knowledge created is broadly disseminated for public benefit outside of the Research Organisation or legal entity that represents the Research Organisation
- h. not be made by:
 - i. an entity listed in any of the parts of Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act 2020
 - ii. a local authority as defined in section 5 of the Local Government Act 2002
 - iii. the New Zealand Police
 - iv. New Zealand Defence Force or
 - v. the Parliamentary Counsel Office
- i. be for research, science or technology, or related activities, the majority of which are to be undertaken in New Zealand, unless the Board considers that there are compelling reasons to consider the proposal, despite the amount of research, science or technology or related activities being proposed to be undertaken overseas
- j. 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
- k. advise that the proposed funding recipient will, and the Board must be of the view that it can, adhere to the terms and conditions of funding set out in an investment contract determined by the Board
- l. not be for activities already funded from another external source
- m. come within the total organisational funding Cap that applies to the proposal
- n. not include out-of-scope research outcomes related to defence that amount to 50% or more of the proposal's outcomes.

Organisational caps

Each organisation has a maximum number of proposals it may submit. Organisations may register more proposals than this limit, but the number of proposals submitted must not exceed the organisation's published cap on the [Transition Research Fund 2027 web pages](#).

Registrations

To provide flexibility in the selection of proposals, organisations may submit registrations up to 120% of their published organisational cap, rounded up to the next whole number. If an organisation exceeds this limit, MBIE will retain registrations based on submission timestamp order, beginning with the earliest submitted registrations, until the permitted number is reached. Registrations above the limit will not progress.

If you wish to withdraw registrations that are no longer required, please do this before 9 December 2026 and follow these instructions:

- Draft registrations: If a registration is still in Draft status, it can be cancelled directly in Pītau by the applicant.
- Submitted registrations: If a registration has already been submitted to MBIE, email us and advise which registration(s) you would like to withdraw.

Proposals

Organisations may submit no more proposals than their published organisational cap. If an organisation exceeds its cap after the proposal submission period, MBIE will accept proposals in submission timestamp order, beginning with the earliest submitted proposals, until the cap is reached. Proposals above the cap will not be considered.

If you wish to withdraw proposals that are no longer required, please do this before 3 March 2027 and follow these instructions:

- Draft proposals: Can be cancelled directly in Pītau by the applicant.
- Submitted proposals: If a proposal has already been submitted to MBIE, email us and advise which proposal(s) you would like to withdraw.

Key dates

Activity	Date
Registration period	5 October 2026 to 12 noon, 9 December 2026
Proposal submission period	5 October 2026 to 12 noon, 3 March 2027
Applicant information webinar	13 October 2026
Panel Members published	Early November 2026
Initial eligibility assessment of proposals	March 2027
RFNZ consider initial eligibility assessments and decide on those proposals that will be assessed	March 2027
Ineligible applicants notified	March 2027
Progressing proposals are assessed by members of the College of Assessors	March/April 2027
RFNZ consider proposals and decide on those progressing to the Panel meeting	May 2027

Applicants of proposals not progressing to the Panel meeting are notified	Early June 2027
Panel meetings held	July 2027
RFNZ makes final funding decisions	By 1 September 2027
Applicants are notified of final funding decisions (under embargo) before funding decisions are announced	Mid-September 2027
Funding decisions announced	Mid-September 2027
Unsuccessful applicants are provided feedback	Late September 2027
Contracts begin	1 October 2027

Dates are subject to change. If they change, we'll let you know by email or by stakeholder alert. You can also subscribe to Alerts [Science and Innovation updates](#).

Applicant information webinar

Join us for a webinar for the Programmes mechanism on 13 October 2026 including live Q&As. The webinar will provide everything you need to know about applying to the Programmes mechanism of the TRF2027 investment round.

[Register here](#)

The recording of the webinar presentation will be published on this page before the end of November 2026.

Key resources

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the following documents before developing a proposal. These documents provide the strategic context, eligibility requirements and assessment expectations that will be considered during the assessment and funding decision process.

- [Transition Research Fund 2027](#)
Gives an overview of the objectives of TRF2027 and how the 3 funding mechanisms fit together.
- [Science Investment Plan 2026–2036](#)
New Zealand's national strategic priorities for science and research investment, alongside a long-term investment profile.
- [Pillar Investment Plans 2026-2031](#)
Medium-term strategies for each of the 4 science and innovation pillars that translate the high-level priorities in the Science Investment Plan 2026-2036 into specific investment objectives, funding approaches, and expected outcomes. They describe what each pillar is expected to achieve, how funding will be allocated to deliver government priorities, and the measures that will be used to track success.

- [Transition Research Fund Investment Plan 2027](#)

Provides the purpose and scope of TRF2027, including the objectives of each mechanism and the Government's investment signals and priorities for TRF2027.

- [2027 Transition Research Fund Gazette Notice: published 14 May 2026](#)
- [2027 Transition Research Fund Gazette Notice: published 23 June 2026](#)
- [Amendment—2027 Transition Research Fund Gazette Notice: published 5 October 2026](#)

The Gazette Notices set the rules for TRF2027, explaining what TRF2027 aims to achieve, how funding is allocated, who can apply, and how proposals will be assessed.

- [Vision Mātauranga policy](#)
- [Programmes Assessment and Scoring Guidance - 2027 Investment Round](#)
- [Programmes Registration template](#)
- [Programmes Proposal template](#)
- [Transition Research Fund Contract template](#)
- [Pītau](#)

Trusted Research Guidance

Please familiarise yourself with the Trusted Research Guidance for Institutions and Researchers. Applicants should consider whether their proposed research may involve sensitive technologies or other trusted research risks and how these risks could be managed. While this is not assessed during proposal assessment, MBIE undertakes a sensitive technologies risk assessment for all proposals that progress to the Panel meeting. Any required risk mitigations will normally be incorporated into the funding contract for successful proposals.

[Trusted Research Guidance](#)

How to apply

Applications to the Programmes mechanism must be completed and submitted through [Pītau](#), MBIE's secure online Investment Management System. The application process has 2 stages: registration followed by proposal. You must submit a registration by the registration deadline to be able to submit a proposal.

Before starting your application, review the Key resources listed above and ensure that you have access to Pītau.

The templates are provided to help you draft your registrations and proposals before submitting in Pītau.

As an applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that:

- your registration and proposal are complete
- all required supporting information has been provided
- the application is submitted before the relevant deadline.

Accessing Pītau

If you already have a Pītau account, you can access the system using the link in the Key resources section.

If you do not have a Pītau login:

- contact your Research Office to request access; or
- if your organisation does not have a Research Office, request access directly from [MBIE](#).

MBIE can assist with accessing Pītau and provide guidance on entering and submitting your application. MBIE cannot advise you on the merits of your proposal.

Registration

The registration stage provides MBIE early notice of expected proposals. This helps the planning for the assessment process. Registrations are not assessed and do not affect funding decisions. Only applicants who submit a registration may continue submitting a proposal.

After registration, applicants may refine the scope, team composition and research approach before submitting their proposal, provided it remains broadly consistent with the registration.

Proposal

The proposal is the application that will be assessed for funding. Applicants should address all assessment criteria and provide sufficient information for Assessors and Panel Members to evaluate the programme's Impact and Excellence.

If your proposal is successful, this information will also form the basis of your funding contract.

Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID iD)

Applicants are encouraged to provide their ORCID iD as part of their proposal, especially Principal Investigators and Key Researchers. An ORCID iD is a unique, persistent digital identifier that distinguishes individual researchers and helps connect them accurately with their research activities, contributions and outputs.

Providing an ORCID iD is recommended but not mandatory. Applicants who do not provide an ORCID iD will not be disadvantaged, and its inclusion will not influence the eligibility or assessment of the proposal.

Artificial Intelligence

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools presents an opportunity to assist researchers in the crafting of proposals, but this may raise issues around authorship and intellectual property including copyright. Content produced by AI may be based on the intellectual property of others or may also be factually incorrect. MBIE advises applicants to use caution in relation to the use of AI tools in developing their proposals. All applicants will be required to sign a proposal declaration on the portal to confirm that they take full responsibility for the content of the proposal, the suitability and validity of cited sources and originality of content, and to confirm that your proposal does not contain false or misleading information.

Conflicts of Interest

Applicants must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest involving Assessors, RFNZ members, and Panel members. Conflicts may be direct or indirect.

Before completing the Conflicts of Interest section of your registration or proposal, review the published lists of [College of Assessors members](#), [RFNZ members](#), and Panel members published on the [Call for Proposals web page](#).

What is considered a conflict of interest

A direct conflict of interest may exist where an Assessor, RFNZ member or Panel member:

- is directly involved with a proposal (as a participant, manager, mentor, or partner)
- has a close personal relationship with the applicant, for example, family members
- is otherwise involved with an applicant's work programme, for example a collaborator.

An indirect conflict of interest may exist where an Assessor, RFNZ member or Panel member:

- is employed by an organisation involved in a proposal but is not part of the applicant's work programme
- has a personal and/or professional relationship with one of the applicants, for example, an acquaintance
- has, or previously had, involvement with a proposal that is in direct competition with a proposal being assessed
- may have personal or business interests that could compete with, or be affected by, the proposed impacts of the proposal.

Declaring a conflict of interest

Declare all conflicts of interest in the Conflicts of Interest section of your registration or proposal.

If you identify a potential conflict of interest after submitting your proposal, you must notify us immediately by [emailing transition fund 2027](#) with details of the conflict.

Please note that declaring a large number of conflicts, or declaring entire institutions as conflicted, may reduce the pool of Assessors available to assess your proposal.

Panel members

An independent Panel approved by RFNZ will review proposals at the Panel meeting stage. The Panel member names and biographies will be published on the [Call for Proposals web page](#) in early November 2026.

Assessment process

1. Decision on progression to assessment

RFNZ will consider proposals against the eligibility criteria and decide which proposals will progress to assessment. MBIE will only notify applicants whose proposals are determined to be ineligible by RFNZ.

2. Assessment

Each proposal will be independently assessed for Impact and Excellence by 4 Assessors from MBIE's College of Assessors. Assessors will:

- review the proposal against each assessment criterion
- assign a score from 1 (low quality) to 7 (high quality) for each criterion
- provide comments to support their scores.

Assessors have been selected based on their knowledge and experience and have not been selected as a 'representative' of a particular organisation or sector.

3. Decision on progression to the Panel meeting

RFNZ will consider:

- application eligibility against the gazetted criteria
- Assessor scores and comments
- a rank list per pillar of proposals based on Assessment.
- any other relevant information specified in this Call.

RFNZ will decide which proposals progress to the Panel meeting. MBIE will notify unsuccessful applicants.

4. Panel meeting

Before the Panel meeting, each Panel Member will review their allocated proposals and the Assessor scores and comments.

At the Panel meeting, the Panel will review the proposals and agree a consensus score and comment for each assessment criterion, as well as an overall score. These scores will be used to produce a moderated rank list for each pillar. The Panel will then take a portfolio approach when considering proposals within each pillar, taking account of the moderated rank list, available funding and the investment signals in the Transition Research Fund Investment Plan 2027, to inform its funding recommendations to RFNZ.

The Panel Chair (a member of RFNZ) will use the discussion and consensus comments to inform the written feedback provided to unsuccessful applicants once RFNZ has made the funding decision.

5. Final funding decisions

The Panel Chair will provide a report to RFNZ setting out the Panel's agreed scores and comments, together with its findings from considering the proposals collectively within each pillar. This report will make a funding recommendation to RFNZ.

RFNZ will consider the Panel Chair's report and may make final funding decisions in accordance with the portfolio approach set out in the Gazette Notice.

RFNZ will make the final funding decisions. MBIE will notify applicants of RFNZ's decisions.

Feedback to applicants

Feedback will be provided to applicants following the final funding announcement at the end of the funding round.

Applicants whose proposals do not progress to the Panel meeting will receive Assessor feedback. Assessors will provide one strength and one weakness for each proposal and this feedback will be provided verbatim to applicants.

Applicants whose proposals progress to the Panel meeting but are not funded will receive the Panel's consensus comments.

No feedback will be provided for funded proposals.

The assessment criteria

Each proposal will be assessed against the criteria below and assigned a score from 1 (low quality) to 7 (high quality) for each criterion. Proposals that progress to the Panel meeting will be reviewed using the same criteria and scoring scale.

Impact (total weighting 50%)

Benefit to New Zealand (weighted 25%)

The extent to which the proposed research has the potential to deliver meaningful outcomes for New Zealand's economic, social or environmental benefit, including:

- the scale and extent of potential benefits to New Zealand from the proposed research, science or technology or related activities
- the extent of alignment with the National Pillar Priorities
- if applicable, the extent to which the project has identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.

Implementation Pathway(s) (weighted 25%)

Research should have an indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefit to New Zealand that is not limited to a single firm or end-user, and an understanding of the barriers to impact.

Assessment must have regard to:

- the degree to which the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the enablers and barriers in potential implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand
- the credibility of indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand, not limited to a single firm or end-user
- identification of the indicative end- or next-users, beneficiaries, and stakeholders
- the mix of complementary skills and experience, within the team, relevant to achieving impact in the proposed impact areas
- where there is Mātauranga Māori, assess whether there is sufficient input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) of the project, that is adequately resourced, to ensure effective implementation.

Excellence (total weighting 50%)

Science Excellence (weighted 25%)

The extent to which the proposed research is fit for purpose, rigorous, innovative, ethically conducted and internationally benchmarked, and addresses areas of clear national need.

Assessment must have regard to whether the proposal:

- progresses and disseminates new knowledge
- has a well-designed, coherent, and credible research plan, including appropriate identification and management of risk (noting that higher levels of uncertainty may be appropriate for exploratory research)
- is ambitious in terms of scientific risk, technical risk, novelty and/or innovative approaches
- demonstrates a clear, well-justified rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand
- is fit for purpose: it can advance New Zealand beyond the current state of knowledge and practice to deliver the intended outcomes
- is well positioned within the domestic and international research context, including how it builds on, complements, or differentiates from existing work
- considers the relevance of Vision Mātauranga policy and, where relevant, demonstrates a fit-for-purpose approach; where not relevant, this is clearly stated.

Team Excellence (weighted 25%)

The proposed team should have a mix of complementary skills, knowledge and resources to deliver the proposed research, science or technology or related activities, and to manage risk.

Assessment must have regard to whether:

- the mix of interdisciplinary skills is appropriate for the research
- the team has the skills, knowledge and resources that give confidence in their ability to deliver the research
- the extent to which the proposed partnerships and collaborations strengthen the delivery, impact, and relevance of the research, including through enhancing international connectedness
- if applicable, the team has the appropriate Mātauranga Māori expertise for the project.

How funding decisions will be made

RFNZ will make final funding decisions to those proposals that they consider will deliver the greatest impact for New Zealand. RFNZ must make funding decisions on proposals for TRF2027 in accordance with:

- the Public Finance Act 1989 and the relevant Appropriation Acts for Vote Business, Science and Innovation
- the eligibility and assessment criteria specified in the Gazette Notices and the relevant schedules in the Gazette Notice listed in the Key resources section
- the investment signals set out in the Investment Plan
- the Government's Vision Mātauranga policy, if applicable to the proposal.

RFNZ may also consider a portfolio approach.

Portfolio approach

Final funding decisions will not be based solely on proposal rankings. RFNZ may take a portfolio approach, considering how proposals collectively contribute to a balanced portfolio within each pillar, having regard to the National Pillar Priorities, the indicative funding available for each pillar, and the relative merits of competing proposals.

Where RFNZ takes a portfolio approach to funding decisions on proposals for TRF2027, this will include:

- ensuring each proposal funded has sufficient merit as assessed against the assessment criteria in Schedule 3 of the Gazette Notices
- considering how the overall mix of investments made meets the investment signals in the Investment Plan, Science Investment Plan and Pillar Investment Plans, with particular regard to the funding amounts set out in the funding table above
- ensuring that the best proposals are funded within each pillar to the extent that is practical within funding amounts set out in the funding table above
- considering the value offered by the largest Programme proposals
- meeting general policy objectives and specific objectives set out in the Gazette Notice including the Vision Mātauranga policy.

For Programmes proposals, any portfolio balancing will occur within each pillar. This will support the selection of the strongest mix of Programmes proposals within the funding available for that pillar.

Notification and publication

We will advise the proposal's Application Administrator or Research Office of the funding decisions in September 2027. Details of the successful applications will be published on our Transition Research Fund 2027 web page and announced by a press release, and potentially by the Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology.

The Transition Research Fund Contract template sets out what information MBIE may publish about funded Programmes contracts.

Contracting, payment, reporting and monitoring

The contracting process

If RFNZ decides to invest in your proposal, MBIE will enter into a Funding Contract with your organisation (subject to any pre-contractual conditions being met). The Transition Research Fund Contract template is available in the Key resources section.

The signed contract must be returned to MBIE within one month of being issued, unless MBIE agrees otherwise.

RFNZ may:

- set pre-contractual conditions that must be met before MBIE and the applicant organisation can enter into a contract
- set special contractual conditions
- vary the amount of funding allocated from that requested.

Payments

The total funding awarded will be paid in equal monthly instalments over the term of the contract, unless otherwise specified.

Reporting and monitoring

Successful applicants will be required to submit annual reports and a final report through Pītau. MBIE will evaluate these reports to monitor progress and performance.

Reports are due to MBIE each year in August with the first one due in 2028, with a final report due at the end of the contract. Reporting guidance and templates are published annually.

Annual reports

Guidance for the first annual report will be published by June 2028. The report is expected to cover:

- progress against the deliverables and tasks set out in the work programme
- any emerging risks
- action being taken to manage those risks.

Annual reports are due in August each year and cover the period from 1 July to 30 June.

Final report

Guidance for the final report will be published by June 2032. The final report is expected to cover:

- the project's overall outcomes and key achievements
- the steps taken to deliver the project
- any changes made to the approach and the reasons for those changes
- an updated public statement.

Contact

If you have any questions about applications, please contact your host organisation's research office, in the first instance.

You can contact MBIE's [Transition Research Fund 2027 team](#) if:

- your organisation does not have a research office
- your organisation's research office cannot assist you

For Pītau queries email the [IMS Support Team](#) or phone:

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

You can also subscribe to our Alert e-newsletter: [Science and Innovation updates](#)

Programmes Assessment and Scoring Guidance - 2027 Investment Round

Your proposal will be assessed using the guidance, criteria, and scoring tables below.

This information is also produced in scoring grids, see appendix.

All assessment criteria will be assessed in line with the policy intent of the Transition Research Fund 2027 as outlined in the Transition Research Fund 2027 Investment Plan and Gazette Notice.

Impact – Benefit to New Zealand (25% weighting)

The extent to which the proposed research has the potential to deliver meaningful outcomes for New Zealand's economic, social or environmental benefit, including:

- the scale and extent of potential benefits to New Zealand from the proposed research, science or technology or related activities
- the extent of alignment with the National Pillar Priorities
- if applicable, the extent to which the project has identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.

If there is clearly no alignment with the National Pillar Priorities, a score of 1 will be recorded.

Note that proposals may range from exploratory, discovery-led research through to applied research. Applicants' responses should be appropriate to the nature, maturity, and expected timeframe of the proposed work.

The scores in the table below range from 1 (low quality) to 7 (high quality).

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is negligible. The outcomes have no alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has not identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
2	Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is minimal. The outcomes have doubtful alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has poorly identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
3	Limited Uncertain Some	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is limited. The outcomes have some alignment with National Pillar Priorities.

	Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible	Where relevant, the project has partially identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is adequate. The outcomes have reasonable alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has adequately identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
5	Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is significant. The outcomes have good alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has clearly identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
6	Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is extensive. The outcomes have very good alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has comprehensively identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Definite	The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is outstanding. The outcomes have outstanding alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has outstandingly identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.

Impact – Implementation Pathway (25% weighting)

Research should have an indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefit to New Zealand that is not limited to a single firm or end-user, and an understanding of the barriers to impact.

Assessment must have regard to:

- the degree to which the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the enablers and barriers in potential implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand
- the credibility of indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand, not limited to a single firm or end-user

- c. identification of the indicative end- or next-users, beneficiaries, and stakeholders
- d. the mix of complementary skills and experience, within the team, relevant to achieving impact in the proposed impact areas
- e. where there is Mātauranga Māori, assess whether there is sufficient input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) of the project, that is adequately resourced, to ensure effective implementation.

The scores in the table below range from 1 (low quality) to 7 (high quality).

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible	The indicative implantation pathway(s) is not credible because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is missing. It will not deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is limited to a single firm or end-user. No credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are no skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has no input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
2	Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has minimal credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is lacking. It will inadequately deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user Lacking evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are doubtful skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has minimal input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
3	Limited Uncertain Some Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has limited credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is uncertain. It will deliver limited public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Partially credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders.

		There are possible skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has partial input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has acceptable credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is acceptable. It will suitably deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Reasonable credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are adequate skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has reasonable input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
5	Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has good credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is good. It will clearly deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Substantial credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are clear skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has good input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
6	Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has very good credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is high. It will strongly deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Certain credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are very good skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact.

		For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has extensive input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Definite	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has outstanding credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is excellent. It will highly likely deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Outstanding credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are impressive skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has excellent input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.

Excellence - Science (25% weighting)

The extent to which the proposed research is fit for purpose, rigorous, innovative, ethically conducted and internationally benchmarked, and addresses areas of clear national need.

Assessment must have regard to whether the proposal:

- progresses and disseminates new knowledge
- has a well-designed, coherent, and credible research plan, including appropriate identification and management of risk (noting that higher levels of uncertainty may be appropriate for exploratory research)
- is ambitious in terms of scientific risk, technical risk, novelty and/or innovative approaches
- demonstrates a clear, well-justified rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand
- is fit for purpose: it can advance New Zealand beyond the current state of knowledge and practice to deliver the intended outcomes
- is well positioned within the domestic and international research context, including how it builds on, complements, or differentiates from existing work
- considers the relevance of Vision Mātauranga policy and, where relevant, demonstrates a fit-for-purpose approach; where not relevant, this is clearly stated.

The scores in the table below range from 1 (low quality) to 7 (high quality).

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible	No new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are not credible. Risk is not managed. There is no scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is missing. The proposal is not fit for purpose and does not advance New Zealand beyond its current state.

		The research is not credibly positioned domestically and internationally, and does not build on, complement or differentiate from existing work. Where relevant, there is no recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is missing.
2	Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely	Minimal new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are inadequate. Risk is poorly managed. There is little scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is lacking. The proposal is inadequately fit for purpose and doubtful that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is poorly positioned domestically and internationally, and minimally builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is minimal recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is lacking.
3	Limited Uncertain Some Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible	Limited new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology lack detail. Risk management lacks detail. There is some scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is uncertain. The proposal is partially fit for purpose and uncertain that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is partially positioned domestically and internationally, and possibly builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is limited recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is incomplete.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely	Suitable new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are adequate. Risk management is reasonable. There is sufficient scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is acceptable.

		The proposal is adequately fit for purpose and is quite likely that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is reasonably positioned domestically and internationally, and suitably builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is suitable recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is acceptable.
5	Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable	Significant new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are good. Risk management is clear. There is substantial scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is clear. The proposal is largely fit for purpose and clear that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is largely positioned domestically and internationally, and significantly builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is good recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is clear.
6	Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain	Extensive new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are comprehensive. Risk management is comprehensive. There is extensive scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is very good. The proposal is certainly fit for purpose and strongly advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is strongly positioned domestically and internationally, and extensively builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is very good recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is strong.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding	Impressive new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are exemplary. Risk management is impressive. There is definite scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty.

	Total Definite	Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is excellent. The proposal is outstandingly fit for purpose and definitely advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is impressively positioned domestically and internationally, and definitely builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is outstanding recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is excellent.
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Excellence - Team (25% weighting)

The proposed team should have the mix of complementary skills, knowledge and resources to deliver the proposed research, science or technology or related activities, and to manage risk.

Assessment must have regard to whether:

- the mix of interdisciplinary skills is appropriate for the research
- the team has the skills, knowledge and resources that give confidence in their ability to deliver the research
- the extent to which the proposed partnerships and collaborations strengthen the delivery, impact, and relevance of the research, including through enhancing international connectedness
- if applicable, the team has the appropriate Mātauranga Māori expertise for the project.

The scores in the table below range from 1 (low quality) to 7 (high quality).

Score	Keywords	Example
1	(Low quality) None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is missing. The team has none of the skills, knowledge, or resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are missing. When you would otherwise expect it, appropriate Māori expertise in the team is missing.
2	Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is lacking. The team has an inadequate mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are insufficient. When you would otherwise expect it, the team is lacking appropriate Māori expertise.
3	Limited Uncertain Some Partial	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is limited. The team has a partial mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed.

	Incomplete Lacks detail Possible	The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are limited. When you would otherwise expect it, there is limited appropriate Māori expertise in the team.
4	Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is adequate. The team has a suitable mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are suitable. If applicable, there is reasonable or appropriate Māori expertise in the team.
5	Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is good. The team has a good mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are clear. If applicable, there is significant appropriate Māori expertise in the team.
6	Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is very good. The team has a comprehensive mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are strong. If applicable, there is comprehensive appropriate Māori expertise in the team.
7	(High quality) Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Definite	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is very excellent. The team has an impressive mix of the necessary skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are impressive If applicable, there is exemplary appropriate Māori expertise in the team.

Guidance on Terms

Ambitious	- Seeks to advance New Zealand beyond the current state of knowledge and practice through challenging, novel or high-value research. - May involve a greater degree of scientific or technical uncertainty where justified by the potential significance of the outcomes.
Benefit (as it relates to Impact)	Impact being the strong positive effect or influence of a research outcome. Example impacts include: - protecting New Zealand's reputation or diversifying the economy - economic gains – e.g., from the attraction of multinational businesses to, or retention of business in, New Zealand - improved social well-being or preservation of cultural heritage and values - improved or better environmental outcomes - increased resilience to natural hazards and adaptation to climate change - better informed government policy - better use of resources or more efficient processes, e.g., via creation of a research platform that has additional utility for users - support for emerging and new sectors or upskilling existing industry - job creation, e.g., via new start-ups or development of a cluster of businesses - new, or improvement to existing, standards or approaches for regulators - generation of new knowledge, insights, methods or capabilities that enable future applications, pathways to use, or downstream economic, environmental, or social benefits for New Zealand - strengthening New Zealand's research capability, including specialist expertise, emerging researchers, partnerships and research platforms that contribute to future innovation and impact. Benefit to New Zealand should be in context of the scale and extent of the impact (see below). - When assessing benefit, consider the value of the investment over the cost of performing the research, recognising that benefits may be direct or indirect, immediate or long-term, and may arise through future application of new knowledge rather than a foreseeable commercial outcome.
Capability	- The skills, knowledge, experience, expertise and resources required to successfully undertake and deliver the proposed research, science or technology, or related activities. - May include individual, team, organisational or system capability, including specialist expertise, research infrastructure, partnerships and the development of future capability.
Credible/Credibility	- Realistic, evidence-based and sufficiently justified, with assumptions, claims and expectations supported by appropriate information. - Demonstrates a reasonable likelihood of being successfully delivered within the proposed timeframe, resources and risk settings.
Credible research plan	Contains all of the expected elements, in a way which can be managed and effectively implemented. Expected elements include:

	- the research methods/methodology, design and proposed outputs - a risk management and mitigation plan - provision for access to and use of the facilities and equipment for carrying out the research.
Dissemination	- Making the research results available for potential end- or next-users so that impact and benefits can be achieved. - May vary according to the situation and should not be confined to publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals. For example, a patent publication is a form of dissemination.
Extent	- The area or degree of coverage of the benefits, irrespective of scale. - Consider whether benefits are narrow (for example, individual organisations), widespread (for example, across multiple sectors), or enabling (for example, increasing uptake of investments already made). Benefit should not solely be to a single firm or end-user.
Fit for purpose	- Appropriate and well matched to the research objectives, intended outcomes, and stage of the research. - Uses methods, resources, partnerships and approaches that are suitable for delivering the proposed research and its intended outcomes.
Innovation/Innovative	- Bringing in new methods or ideas for adaptation to New Zealand context or applications. - Degrees of innovation range from minor innovations of existing processes/techniques to the implementation of completely new processes/techniques that significantly challenge the status quo. - Can include the application of existing processes or techniques in new or unexpected areas. - Advances knowledge, understanding, methods, data or capabilities beyond the current state of research and practice.
National Pillar Priorities	- The National Pillar Priorities set out the science and research investments required to lift New Zealand's economic growth and productivity, environmental resilience, and living standards. Opportunities are clearly defined investment areas, to enable system performance and national impact. - The priority opportunity areas identified within the four pillars of the Science Investment Plan: Technology for Prosperity, Primary Industries and Bioeconomy, Environmental Sustainability and Resilience, and Healthy People and a Thriving Society. - Alignment should be demonstrated through a clear and meaningful contribution to one or more priority opportunities, rather than by broad or incidental relevance.
Novelty	- A new method or idea. - All or some elements of a proposal may be novel. - Novelty can range from making incremental to ground-breaking advances, and from novelty in science approach to intended outcomes.
Pathway(s) to impact/Implementation Pathway	A plan that outlines, in sufficient detail, the steps a team will take in the goal to disseminate and realise impact from research outputs.

	• A credible implementation pathway should cover the ‘who, what and how’ within the plan, including identified end-users and beneficiaries, potential partners, and key events or milestones required to deliver. • The implementation pathway should be appropriate for the research stage. Thus, a pathway for a talent development project is likely to be more speculative in approach and detail than a pathway for a programme. • Examples used should be credible and specific (such as identifying the form or requirements of regulatory approvals). • Consider the relevant skills and experiences of the team and how the plan will leverage existing or future relationships/networks for maximising outcomes.
Rigorous	• Extremely thorough and accurate, allowing little to no room for error.
Risk	• Risk is defined as the effect of uncertainty on objectives, both research and outcomes. • Scientific and technical risk is the basis of an ambitious proposal. This includes assumptions based on current knowledge or scientific principles. • A project that involves risk may seek to apply scientific techniques in an unproven or speculative way. • The level of risk taken should be justified by the magnitude of the impact benefits sought. The level of risk should be matched by appropriate risk management.
Risk Management	• The coordinated activities used to direct and control a project or its’ objectives when regarding risks. Risk should be managed through risk mitigation strategies and/or contingency plans. • Residual risk should be considered against the potential additional scientific value.
Scale	Relative size, in context, for example: • an economic development project may express scale in financial worth or as a share of a market • social and environmental projects may use statistics on population size, the number of people or organisations affected, or level of emissions reduced • in assessing scale, consider the value over and above business as usual.
Well-positioned	The research takes account of existing knowledge and research, either by: • avoiding redundancy or overlap, or • using existing knowledge/research as a platform for achieving more significant advances in knowledge than would otherwise be the case • describing links with key related science activities (often funded separately) which are complementary or synergistic • has international links that provide leverage and additional value. • being well matched to the outcome opportunity that it is intended to address • demonstrates an understanding of the domestic and international research context, including how the proposed research builds on, complements or differs from existing work.

Appendix – Scoring Grids

Impact: Benefit To New Zealand (25% weighting)	SCORE & KEYWORDS						
	1 (Low quality) <i>None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible</i>	2 <i>Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely</i>	3 <i>Limited Uncertain Some Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible</i>	4 <i>Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely</i>	5 <i>Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable</i>	6 <i>Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain</i>	7 (High quality) <i>Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Definite</i>
The extent to which the proposed research has the potential to deliver meaningful outcomes for New Zealand’s economic, social or environmental benefit, including: a. the scale and extent of potential benefits to New Zealand from the proposed research, science or technology or related activities; b. the extent of alignment with the National Pillar Priorities; and c. if applicable, the extent to which the project has identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori. If there is clearly no alignment with the National Pillar Priorities, you must record a score of 1.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is negligible. The outcomes have no alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has not identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is minimal. The outcomes have doubtful alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has poorly identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is limited. The outcomes have some alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has partially identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is adequate. The outcomes have reasonable alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has adequately identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is significant. The outcomes have good alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has clearly identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is extensive. The outcomes have very good alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has comprehensively identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.	For example: The scale and extent of the potential (direct or indirect) benefits of the proposed work is outstanding. The outcomes have outstanding alignment with National Pillar Priorities. Where relevant, the project has outstandingly identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.

Impact: Implementation Pathway (25% weighting)	SCORE & KEYWORDS						
	1 (Low quality) <i>None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible</i>	2 <i>Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely</i>	3 <i>Limited Uncertain Some Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible</i>	4 <i>Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely</i>	5 <i>Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable</i>	6 <i>Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Likely</i>	7 (High quality) <i>Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Highly likely</i>
Research should have an indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefit to New Zealand that is not limited to a single firm or end-user, and an understanding of the barriers to impact. Assessment must have regard to: a. the degree to which the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the enablers and barriers in potential implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand; b. the credibility of indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand, not limited to a single firm or end-user; c. identification of the indicative end- or next-users, beneficiaries, and stakeholders; d. the mix of complementary skills and experience, within the team, relevant to achieving impact in the	The indicative implantation pathway(s) is not credible because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is missing. It will not deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is limited to a single firm or end-user. No credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are no skills or experience within the team	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has minimal credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is lacking. It will inadequately deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Lacking evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are doubtful skills or experience within the team	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has limited credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is uncertain. It will deliver limited public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Partially credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are possible skills or experience	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has acceptable credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is acceptable. It will suitably deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Reasonable credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are adequate skills or experience within the team	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has good credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is good. It will clearly deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Substantial credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are clear skills or experience within the team	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has very good credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is high. It will strongly deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Certain credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are very good skills or experience within the team relevant to achieving impact.	The indicative implementation pathway(s) has outstanding credibility because: The understanding of the enablers and barriers for potential implementation pathways is excellent. It will highly likely deliver public benefit to New Zealand, as benefit is not limited to a single firm or end-user. Outstanding credible evidence and identification of relevant strong relationships with end/next-users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. There are impressive skills or

e. proposed impact areas; and where there is Mātauranga Māori, assess whether there is sufficient input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) of the project, that is adequately resourced, to ensure effective implementation.	relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has no input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.	relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has minimal input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.	within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has partial input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.	relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has reasonable input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.	relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has good input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.	For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has extensive input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.	experience within the team relevant to achieving impact. For proposals with Mātauranga Māori, the proposal has excellent input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) or levels to ensure effective implementation, given the focus of the research plan.
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Excellence: Science (25% Weighting)	SCORE & KEYWORDS						
	1 (Low quality) None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible	2 Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely	3 Limited Uncertain Some Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible	4 Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely	5 Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable	6 Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain	7 (High quality) Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Definite
The extent to which the proposed research is fit for purpose, rigorous, innovative, ethically conducted and internationally benchmarked, and addresses areas of clear national need. Assessment must have regard to whether the proposal: a. progresses and disseminates new knowledge; b. has a well-designed, coherent, and credible research plan, including appropriate identification and management of risk (noting that higher levels of uncertainty may be appropriate for exploratory research); c. is ambitious in terms of scientific risk, technical risk, novelty and/or innovative approaches; d. demonstrates a clear, well-justified rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand; e. is fit for purpose: it can advance New Zealand beyond the current state of knowledge and practice to	No new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are not credible. Risk is not managed. There is no scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is missing. The proposal is not fit for purpose and does not advance New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is not credibly positioned domestically and internationally, and does not build on, complement or differentiate from existing work.	Minimal new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are inadequate. Risk is poorly managed. There is little scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is lacking. The proposal is inadequately fit for purpose and doubtful that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is poorly positioned domestically and internationally, and minimally builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work.	Limited new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology lack detail. Risk management lacks detail. There is some scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is uncertain. The proposal is partially fit for purpose and uncertain that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is partially positioned domestically and internationally, and possibly builds on, complements or	Suitable new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are adequate. Risk management is reasonable. There is sufficient scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is acceptable. The proposal is adequately fit for purpose and is quite likely that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is reasonably positioned domestically and internationally, and suitably builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work.	Significant new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are good. Risk management is clear. There is substantial scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is clear. The proposal is largely fit for purpose and clear that it advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is largely positioned domestically and internationally, and significantly builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work.	Extensive new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are comprehensive. Risk management is comprehensive. There is extensive scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is very good. The proposal is certainly fit for purpose and strongly advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is strongly positioned domestically and internationally, and extensively builds on, complements or differentiates from existing work.	Impressive new knowledge will be progressed or disseminated. The research plan and methodology are exemplary. Risk management is impressive. There is definite scientific or technical risk, ambition, and or novelty. Rationale for conducting the research in New Zealand is excellent. The proposal is outstandingly fit for purpose and definitely advances New Zealand beyond its current state. The research is impressively positioned domestically and internationally, and definitely builds on, complements or

deliver the intended outcomes; f. is well positioned within the domestic and international research context, including how it builds on, complements, or differentiates from existing work; and g. considers the relevance of Vision Mātauranga policy and, where relevant, demonstrates a fit-for-purpose approach; where not relevant, this is clearly stated.	Where relevant, there is no recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is missing.	Where relevant, there is minimal recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is lacking.	differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is limited recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is incomplete.	Where relevant, there is suitable recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is acceptable.	Where relevant, there is good recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is clear.	Where relevant, there is very good recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is strong.	differentiates from existing work. Where relevant, there is outstanding recognition of the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge, and resources, including Mātauranga Māori. Where not relevant, appropriate explanation is excellent.
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Excellence: Team (25% weighting)	SCORE & KEYWORDS						
	1 (Low quality) None Not fit for purpose Negligible Missing Not credible	2 Minimal Poor Inadequate Insufficient Doubtful Lacking Unlikely	3 Limited Uncertain Some Partial Incomplete Lacks detail Possible	4 Acceptable Sufficient Suitable Adequate Reasonable Quite likely	5 Significant Good Substantial Well Clear Large Probable	6 Strong High Comprehensive Very good Very well Extensive Certain	7 (High quality) Excellent Exemplary Impressive Outstanding Total Definite
The proposed team should have the mix of complementary skills, knowledge and resources to deliver the proposed research, science or technology or related activities, and to manage risk. Assessment must have regard to whether: a. the mix of interdisciplinary skills is appropriate for the research; b. the team has the skills, knowledge and resources that give confidence in their ability to deliver the research; c. the extent to which the proposed partnerships and collaborations strengthen the delivery, impact, and relevance of the research, including through enhancing international connectedness; and d. if applicable, the team has the appropriate Mātauranga Māori expertise for the project.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is missing. The team has none of the skills, knowledge, or resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are missing. When you would otherwise expect it, appropriate Māori expertise in the team is missing.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is lacking. The team has an inadequate mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are insufficient. When you would otherwise expect it, the team is lacking appropriate Māori expertise.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is limited. The team has a partial mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are limited. When you would otherwise expect it, there is limited appropriate Māori expertise in the team.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is adequate. The team has a suitable mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are suitable. If applicable, there is reasonable or appropriate Māori expertise in the team.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is good. The team has a good mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are clear. If applicable, there is significant appropriate Māori expertise in the team.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is very good. The team has a comprehensive mix of the skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are strong. If applicable, there is comprehensive appropriate Māori expertise in the team.	The mix of interdisciplinary skills needed for the research is very excellent. The team has an impressive mix of the necessary skills, knowledge and resources needed. The required partnerships and collaborations (national and/or international) are impressive. If applicable, there is exemplary appropriate Māori expertise in the team.