Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

hrc nz Health Research Council of New Zealand
Te Kauniheaa Rangahau Hauora o Aotearoa

2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund Application Guidelines

December 2025

Use with the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant Application Form

Table of Contents

Part 1: The Health Research Council 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund – key information and requirements

Part 1 sets out the requirements for the He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Fund, including:

- information about the grant available through this fund, including the value and duration
- eligibility criteria that applicants must meet
- information about HRC's requirements outlining the in and out of scope criteria
- an overview of the application process and requirements, including key dates.

Parts 2 and 3 contain instructions for applicants on submitting an application, including administrative requirements and how to demonstrate that the requirements for funding are met.

An overview of the assessment process can be found in Appendix 1 and scoring criteria and anchor point descriptors can be found in Appendix 2.

1.1 Investment objectives

The Health Research Council's (HRC) He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund supports high-quality biomedical and clinical research that will contribute to improving Māori health outcomes, strengthen Māori health research capability, create clear pathways to impact, and deliver both health and economic outcomes.

Research teams should have established networks, collaborations and/or partnerships with industry and/or health providers to enhance timely and actionable translation and uptake of research findings.

Proposals must demonstrate how the research aligns with the key objectives of the fund to:

1. **Support biomedical and/or clinical health research** that produces timely, actionable evidence with clear pathways to clinical application, improved Māori health outcomes (including health system performance), and economic benefit in the short to medium-term (3-5 years) – including through commercialisation.

2. **Grow Māori research capability and capacity** by supporting skilled Māori health researchers and Māori-facing organisations to develop skills and expertise through collaboration and partnership.[1] This includes, but is not limited to, building capacity in health-related STEM fields (e.g. genomics, data science, and biotechnology).

3. **Foster partnerships and collaborations** between Māori-facing organisations, Māori health researchers and communities with industry and/or health providers to enhance translation and uptake of research findings within a clinical or healthcare setting.

He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora funding aligns with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) He Ara Whakahihiko Capability Fund 2025 Investment Plan and the Hauora/Oranga theme of the Vision Mātauranga policy.

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[1] A Māori-facing organisation is defined as any organisation that can demonstrate a meaningful commitment to building science and innovation capability within the Māori economy or for the benefit of Māori communities. These organisations must have established relationships that actively support the growth of Māori research capability and enable effective engagement with Māori communities, knowledge systems, and priorities.

1.2   Funding available

A total funding pool of $1.982 million is available through the He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund.

Funding is available to support up to four research grants each valued at $495,500 (excluding GST) for a term of 24 months.

Funding must contribute to the objectives of this fund and be solely and directly related to the research work programme. Funding can be used to cover salary, work programme development, engagement and dissemination costs, overheads, travel, koha, and research equipment. Carefully review **section 3.5** of these guidelines for detailed guidance on what can and cannot be covered by this funding. You will be required to provide a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with your proposed research.

1.3   Eligibility

While not mandatory, the HRC welcomes proposals with 'co-first named investigators' to create a research team of exceptional strength, e.g. for interdisciplinary work and/or capability development.

Proposals must meet all eligibility criteria to proceed for further assessment. Proposals that do not meet the criteria will be withdrawn.

- The first named investigator and co-first named investigator must have New Zealand as their principal domicile (see definition in the HRC Rules) and their principal place of employment. **Note:** Host organisations are responsible for ensuring that this criterion has been met.

- Applications must be hosted and led by a Māori-facing organisation that is a legally established entity based in Aotearoa New Zealand.

    o   A *Māori-facing organisation* is defined as any organisation that can demonstrate a meaningful commitment to building science and innovation capability within the Māori economy or for the benefit of Māori communities.

    o   These organisations must have established relationships that actively support the growth of Māori research capability and enable effective engagement with Māori communities, knowledge systems, and priorities.

- The host organisation must have the internal capability[2] to carry out science, innovation and technology activities.

- All proposed research activities must be completed within a 24-month funding term and have a budget of $495,000 excluding GST. Shorter research contracts are outside the scope of this funding round, and applications requesting funding beyond the maximum value will be withdrawn.

- Only **one** application to the He Ara Whakahihiko Hauora round as the first-named investigator or co-first named investigator is permitted. All additional applications will be withdrawn.

- The first named investigator and co-first named investigator must complete all progress or end of contract reports that are due from previous contracts in HRC

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[2] Internal capability being sought refers to scientific research qualification/s or equivalent demonstrated experience in the science sector.

Gateway. (HRC Gateway does not allow a new application to be submitted if the first named investigator or co-first named investigator has any outstanding reports).

There is a clear distinction between eligibility, defined above, and alignment with the fund's scope and key objectives. You should consider your research's fit with the scope of the fund, outlined below, before applying. You will need to justify alignment with the fund's objectives when responding to the sections in Module 2.

1.4 HRC requirements

All HRC investment must have a clear line of sight to improving health outcomes.

The HRC Council makes final decisions on funding, informed by the assessing committee recommendations.

Please carefully read the 'in scope' and 'out of scope' guidance below before preparing your application, as out of scope applications will be withdrawn.

In scope for the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund

Proposals should include, but are not limited to:

- A demonstrable pathway to impact by addressing a defined healthcare need for Māori.
- Biomedical or clinical research with translational potential in the short- to medium-term (3-5 years).
- A focus on translatable solutions that improve health outcomes or health system performance (e.g. enhanced clinical care, reduced inequities, improved efficiency).
- Contribution to economic benefit within the health system through contributing new ideas, innovations, knowledge and health technology to support the health system to deliver better outcomes.
- Clear strategies for growing Māori health research capability and leadership, including workforce development initiatives and mentorship for emerging Māori researchers.
- Collaborative and meaningful partnerships between Māori-facing organisations, research teams and communities to ensure outcomes are impactful and aligned with Māori health needs and aspirations.
- Multidisciplinary research teams with the appropriate skills and experience required to meet the objectives of the fund. Teams should include relevant industry and/or health provider representation.

The HRC strongly encourages:

- Research that demonstrates clear potential for commercial pathways for solutions and innovations, contributing to both health and economic impact.

Out of scope for the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund

This round, the HRC is **NOT** intending to invest in:

- Research proposals that contain **_only_** qualitative analysis and methodologies that do not demonstrate a clear pathway to clinical application or health system impact.
- Research that focuses **exclusively** on determinants of health (e.g. environmental, socio-economic, cultural or behavioural factors) except where it demonstrates clearly-integrated biomedical or clinical research components.
- Basic research that focuses exclusively on mechanistic pathways except where it demonstrates a pathway to improvements in health outcomes and/or the health system.

- Evaluations with a sole focus on audits, surveys, and needs assessments undertaken as part of routine operational practice or as part of a government organisation's performance, accountability, or monitoring activities.
- Research that describes a health need or community with high health need without providing a clear evidence base for that need.[3]
- Research that duplicates research already undertaken overseas (without articulating the additional value of undertaking it in New Zealand).

1.5 Key dates

Event	Description	Date
Applications open	Applicants start applications via HRC Gateway	1pm, 8 January 2026
Deadline for creating an application	You must create your application on HRC Gateway by this date	1pm, 5 February 2026
Applications close	You must submit your application on HRC Gateway by this date	1pm, 12 February 2026
Application assessment	Applications reviewed by HRC assessing committees	March – April 2026
Decision	Funding outcome results to be sent to host	11 June 2026

Creation deadline

Please create your application on HRC Gateway by **1 pm on 5 February 2026.** You will also need to provide details of your research team and your lay summary by this date. You will not be able to create an application after this deadline has passed.

Submission deadline

Please submit your application to HRC Gateway by **1 pm on 12 February 2026.** Your application will not be accepted after 1 pm unless you have **written** authorisation from the HRC.

> **Important note**: Your application will be released to the HRC only after it has been approved by your host organisation's research office or equivalent. **You should submit your application before your host organisation's internal submission deadline**, which is usually several working days before the HRC closing date. If your host organisation does not have a research office, your application will be forwarded directly to the HRC.

Commencement date

Your research needs to start by **1 July 2026.**

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[3] CO (24) 5: Needs-based Service Provision | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)

Part 2: General information on how to submit a 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant application

This section sets out general information for applicants to the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant.

The information provided in this section includes:

- instructions for using HRC Gateway to submit an application
- formatting requirements for applications
- guidance about the privacy of application content
- contact information if you need assistance with your application.

Please follow the instructions set out in this section.

2.1   Preparation

HRC Gateway account

You will need an HRC Gateway account to apply for a He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant. Use your existing account or create a new one if you do not have one, via the following URL: https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz. If you have issues logging into your HRC Gateway account, contact info@hrc.govt.nz.

Note: All members of your research team must have an HRC Gateway user account so that their details can be included in the online form. Individual HRC Gateway accounts should be updated annually.

Before submitting an application

Before submitting an application, please read the following resources:

- 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund Application Guidelines (this document)

- 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant Application Form

- He Ara Whakahihiko Capability Fund 2025 Investment Plan

- HRC Māori Health Advancement Guidelines and supporting resources

Additional resources:

- HRC Research Ethics Guidelines

- Guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori

- HRC Research Impact Assessment Slideshow

- ARRIVE guidelines for animal research (if applicable)

- SPIRIT 2025 Statement (if applicable)

Click on the document name to access the file. These documents can also be found on HRC Gateway.

Application forms

You will need to download and complete two different forms when submitting a He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant application:

- 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant Application Form (Microsoft Word template)
- 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Budget Form (Microsoft Excel template)

You can download the application form from the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund information page on HRC Gateway. **Do not use any other templates; otherwise, your application will be withdrawn.**

The application form should be completed in Microsoft Word. Once completed, upload these documents **as a PDF file** to HRC Gateway.

Host organisations

The host organisation is the organisation, institution or company that will be offered a contract with the HRC to deliver the activities described in your application if it is successful. The host organisation will be responsible for ensuring that the activities are completed according to the contract, the HRC Rules, and the HRC He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund requirements.

If your organisation has not been previously funded as a host organisation by the HRC and your application is successful, your organisation will need to provide due diligence information before a contract can be offered. The HRC will provide you with information and the relevant forms for your organisation to complete, if your application is successful.

Consents necessary to carry out research

All applications approved by the HRC must identify and obtain all consents necessary to carry out the research (including, but not limited to, all biosafety, regulatory, human and animal ethical consents) at or prior to the time the consent is necessary. For contract monitoring and HRC accountability reporting, if your research requires biosafety, regulatory, human or animal ethical consents, or clinical trial registration, these must be identified as separate Year 1 milestones, even if you expect to gain these consents before starting the proposed research.

Please refer to your institution's policies or the website of the Health and Disability Ethics Committees for further guidance.

2.2 Writing your application

General formatting

Please write your application in a clear, concise manner with sufficient detail. The assessing committee reviewing your application includes a broad range of expertise. It is important that they can understand the scope and implications of your application.

Applications must be in English or te reo Māori; if in te reo Māori, a translation in English must also be provided (any translation will not be included in the page limit).

Please:

- use Arial 10-point type font or larger
- use default margins
- use single line spacing
- keep to the page limits.

Application formatting compliance

The HRC will not process your application if you do not use the correct HRC application forms or follow the stated page limit and font sizes/styles. Your application will be withdrawn.

Scope compliance

Please review Section 1.4 carefully, as applications involving out-of-scope research types will be withdrawn.

> Please avoid these common pitfalls:
>
> 1. Use the correct application form and the stated font sizes and styles.
>
> 2. Keep within the stated page limits.
>
> 3. Only submit your application using HRC Gateway. Do not send applications or supporting documents to the HRC via email or any other means.
>
> 4. If your host organisation has a research office (or equivalent), your application must be approved by the research office first. The application will then be released to the HRC. Please allow enough time for this approval process before the HRC's closing deadline. All queries regarding applications should be directed to the host organisation's research office rather than to the HRC directly.
>
> 5. Ensure you complete all modules, including Module 1 which must be completed in HRC Gateway. Incomplete applications after the closing date will be considered withdrawn and deleted from HRC Gateway.
>
> 6. Do not include any additional material (e.g. slides, protocols, CVs) as 'supporting documents' on HRC Gateway, and avoid using hyperlinks in the application form. All additional material and hyperlinks will be removed from your application.
>
> 7. Do not send digital files directly to the HRC.
>
> If you are new to the HRC application process and need assistance with using HRC Gateway, please contact the HRC. There are also helpful user guides available.

2.3 Privacy provisions

Statistical and reporting purposes

The information you provide will be used to assess your application. In a non-identifiable form, some information will be used for HRC's statistical and reporting purposes. The HRC stores all applications in a secure place, which may include the New Zealand Research Information System (NZRIS) curated by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) with details provided by funders of the science sector.

Personal information

Personal information in your application will be available to members of the HRC assessing committee reviewing your application.

Public announcements

The HRC publishes details of research contracts including named investigators, the host organisation, research title, lay summaries and funding awarded for public interest purposes and to meet the statutory requirements of the *Health Research Council Act 1990*. This may

include publishing details on research activities you provide to the HRC in media releases, on the HRC website, in newsletters, and in publications and reporting.

Official Information Act

Official Information Act requests for information about an application or research contract, beyond information that has already been publicly disclosed, will be discussed with the host organisation and first named investigator before responding to the request. Where appropriate, the request may be transferred to the host organisation.

2.4 Enquiries

If you have any questions about HRC applications, please contact your host organisation's research office.

You can contact the HRC at info@hrc.govt.nz if:

- your organisation does not have a research office
- your organisation's research office cannot assist you
- you have any technical difficulties (i.e. with HRC Gateway).

HRC Gateway will show the status of any application. Please do not contact the HRC for an update on your application status.

2.5 Additional eligibility requirements

Eligibility restrictions on publicly funded research

The HRC cannot accept applications made by a public service department, as listed in Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act 2020. Named investigators from these departments may not claim salary support.

As part of the New Zealand Government's broader response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a new eligibility criterion has been implemented for government research funding.

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

This is not a broad ban on collaborations with individual Russian researchers. The focus is on ensuring that government funding does not support scientific research collaborations that could further Russia's ability to continue its aggression in Ukraine.

As a Crown agent, investing in health research for the public good with taxpayer funding, the HRC reserves the right to make ineligible any funding application that will benefit a state institution or other organisation identified for exclusion by the New Zealand Government.

Trusted Research Guidance

Please familiarise yourself with the Trusted Research Guidance for Institutions and Researchers. New Zealand has an open and collaborative research and innovation system and values academic freedom and research conducted independently by individuals and organisations. As part of preserving trust, the HRC screens proposals for risk related to sensitive technologies,[4] and may require funded research to identify, mitigate, and monitor risks as part of the contractual conditions of the research.

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[4] Technologies become sensitive when they: are or could become dual-use i.e. have both a civil and military/security application; or, underpin or have the potential to underpin significant economic value for New Zealand.

2.6   False or misleading information

Once submitted to the HRC, a funding application is considered final and no changes will be permitted, although it may be withdrawn. The application is the primary source of information available for assessment. As such, it must contain all the information necessary for assessment without the need for further written explanation or reference to additional documentation at the assessing committee meeting. All details in the application, particularly concerning any awarded grants, must be current and accurate at the time of application.

If an application contains false or misleading information, it may be excluded from any further consideration for funding.

If the HRC believes that omission or inclusion of misleading information is intentional, it may refer the matter to the host organisation for the situation to be addressed under the provisions of the organisational code of conduct. The HRC also reserves the right to not accept future applications from the relevant investigators and/or to pursue legal action if appropriate.

Examples of false or misleading information in an application include:

- violating the standard codes of scholarly conduct and ethical behaviour
- providing fictitious CVs or biographical sketches, including roles in previous research
- omitting advice of publications which have been retracted or are to be considered for retraction
- falsifying claims in publication records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted).

2.7   Complaints and appeals process

The HRC has a policy for considering and ruling on allegations of unfairness from an applicant for any HRC research funding. Complaints or requests for review of an application outcome must be submitted in writing, through the research office of the applicant's host organisation, or directly to the HRC in the absence of an organisational research office. An applicant may submit a complaint or request for review if they consider their application has been processed unfairly or differently from other similar applications, setting out how the applicant feels the application was processed differently, the alleged unfairness, and the remedy sought.

Part 3: Instructions on completing and submitting your 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant application

This section contains instructions for completing and submitting your **He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant** application. It includes prompts for providing certain information that will be used to score your application.

A full application for a 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant consists of six modules.

Complete Module 1 'General information' on HRC Gateway. An HRC Reference ID# will be generated by the system when the application is created.

Complete Module 2 'Research', Module 3 'References', and Sections 4A-C 'Contract information and budget' in the **2026 He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant Application Form** (Microsoft Word template). Refer to **Sections 3.3 - 3.5** for detailed guidance on how to complete each module.

Please upload all letters of collaboration/supporting documents/memorandums of understanding to HRC Gateway. HRC Gateway will automatically generate a list of uploaded documents under Module 4D.

Complete Sections 4E-G 'Research proposal budget, 'Subcontract budget' and 'FTE summary' in the **2026 He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Budget Form** (Microsoft Excel template). Refer to **Section 3.5** for detailed guidance on how to complete the budget form. Please complete all sections and upload the budget form in both **.xlsx and PDF formats** to HRC Gateway. Please make sure all budget tabs are included in the PDF.

A NZ standard CV is required for all named investigators. Upload these to HRC Gateway; they will be compiled in Module 5.

Module 6 'Research classification' is for HRC purposes only and should be completed on HRC Gateway.

The completed application form should be uploaded to HRC Gateway as a PDF file. Before submitting your application, refer to the checklist in the application form to ensure that all requirements have been met.

3.1 The He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant application forms

The form is compatible with most Windows PC and MAC computers. The form has default formatting that conforms to HRC requirements. Figures and tables are best pasted in from a draft document instead of being created directly in the form.

Please:

- Use the original HRC document templates.
- Complete all sections following the instructions on the form and described in these guidelines.
- Enter the HRC reference ID# and first named investigator surname on the coversheet (HRC Gateway will remove the coversheet from the final system-generated PDF).
- Enter information only in the indicated form fields.
- Do not reformat module and section headings.
- Do not delete spreadsheet columns/shaded rows; you may insert more unshaded rows.

3.2 Module 1: General information

> **Note:** All named investigators must have an HRC Gateway account to be included in your application.

Step 1

Start the application process by clicking the 'Create application' button on the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund information page on HRC Gateway. This button will only appear when the application submission period is open. Clicking the 'Create application' button will open a dialog form where the following information is required.

Research title

The research title should be succinct, written in plain language, and clearly describe the proposed research. The title must not exceed 80 characters, including spaces and punctuation (e.g. 'growth factors' contains 14 characters). Please use sentence case. The HRC reserves the right to amend the title of funded applications.

Host organisation

The host organisation is the institution or organisation that will be responsible for administering any contract awarded.

Select the relevant 'Host organisation' from the drop-down list (this shows host organisations currently recognised by the HRC). If applicable, a specific research office and research office contact will be able to be selected.

> **Note:** If your host organisation does not appear in the drop-down list, please tick the check box 'My host organisation is not in the list'. A field 'Host organisation details' will appear in the next section, and the name of the host organisation should be entered here.

If the host organisation has a research office with more than one staff member, please select the contact in the research office who will most likely be handling the application, or who will be the principal contact.

If the host organisation has more than one research office, please select which research office will be handling the application.

Step 2

Click the 'Update' button to enter application details for the following fields.

Lay summary

The lay summary must be 150 words or fewer and clearly state: 1) the purpose of the research and why it is needed; 2) how the research will be completed including the research activities; and 3) anticipated contribution to improvements in health outcomes and/or the health system and intended economic outcomes.

If your proposal receives funding, your lay summary will be published on the HRC website to communicate to the public the aims, activities, impact and value of your research.

Please use plain language that can be easily understood by members of the public and avoid using technical terms, with any acronyms fully written out in the first instance. A good way to

check whether your lay summary is easily understood is by sharing it with colleagues in a different discipline or sector, or friends or family members not involved in research. The HRC reserves the right to amend the lay summary of any HRC-funded research in terms of its readability for a lay audience.

Research location(s)

This is the specific department(s) and organisation where most research or data analysis will be completed.

Discipline

Choose from the drop-down box.

Duration

Enter the proposed term of the research (months).

Type of research

Choose from the drop-down list what you consider the most appropriate term for broadly describing the research application for assessment purposes. The HRC reserves the right to reassign applications to the most appropriate assessing committee.

Commencement date

Enter the proposed commencement date. Please note that the research activity must start by **1 July 2026**. Payments will not commence until the contract has been signed, and all other due diligence or conditional offer requirements have been fulfilled. The HRC is not liable for research that has started prior to the contract being signed.

Support personnel

Examples of support personnel include individuals who will help you with the grant application process (i.e. upload your application to HRC Gateway). Do not list named investigators, collaborators or your host organisation's research office staff. All support personnel need to have an HRC Gateway account to view and edit your application.

Step 3

First named investigator

Some of this information will be automatically populated from the first named investigator's profile in HRC Gateway (e.g. organisation and department). If the profile is not current, details must be updated. The details listed on the application will be automatically refreshed after the profile is updated. Click on the 'Update' button to enter and update the information requested.

The first named investigator will be considered the first point of contact during the application and assessment process and will be understood to be acting for, and in concurrence with, the other named investigators. All correspondence for the application will be addressed to this person and the host. Once an application is created, the first named investigator cannot be changed.

In the case of co-first named investigators, applicants need to add 'named investigators' and choose the role of 'co-first named investigators' in the dropdown list. The role of the co-first named investigator should be described in the appropriate section of the form.

Information on ethnicity, gender and whether the researcher is a clinician (and is practising) is used for HRC information purposes only. Please note that ethnicity, iwi, clinician, or practising

clinician are not required to be entered as these details will automatically populate from the individual's profile.

Named investigators

All named investigators must have an HRC Gateway account before they can be added to the application. **All members named on the research team must be added to this application on HRC Gateway and will be included in Module 1**. Each named investigator will need to sign in to HRC Gateway and check and update their details before applications are submitted. Click the 'Update' button to enter additional information as requested.

Under 'role type', you can assign a role to each individual as follows:

- Co-first named investigator: A co-principal investigator (or co-lead researcher) with joint overall responsibility for the research.
- Named investigator: A named investigator listed on the application, whose expertise and involvement are critical to the grant's success.
- Student: A master's or PhD student named in the grant application.
- Technician: An individual who will complete specific tasks that require technical knowledge and experience (e.g. those collecting participant data, processing and analysing samples, managing datasets, operating equipment, or providing biostatistical or cultural expertise).

Role in grant should include brief information on what the named investigator will undertake in the research (1-2 sentences maximum).

Enter a defined FTE value for each named investigator. Use the FTE value for the first year of that investigator's involvement (from the budget spreadsheet).

A **CV** is required for all named investigators and must be uploaded into this section using the 'Upload CV' button.

Information on ethnicity, gender and whether the researcher is a clinician (and is practicing) is used for HRC information purposes only. Please note ethnicity, iwi, clinician, or practising clinician are not required to be entered as these details will automatically populate from the individual's profile. All named investigators on successful applications may be cited by the HRC in its various communication channels.

Collaborators

Collaborators are individuals who are not named investigators (i.e. not listed as members of the research team) but who contribute in-kind or paid support to assist in conducting the research. Their involvement may include providing expertise, resources, or services to support research activities.

Collaborators do not need to be registered Gateway users. When adding collaborators, please update the person's title, name, organisation, country and support level. You will also need to provide brief details on the purpose of the collaboration.

Step 4

Click the 'Update' button to enter the classification for your application. This information is for HRC data collection purposes only.

Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC)

Categorise the proposed research using the ANZSRC codes for the Fields of Research (FOR) and Socioeconomic Objective (SEO). Enter the percentage to the nearest 10% for each category to a total of 100%.

Keywords

Enter keywords that categorise the research.

Research costs

Click the 'Update' button to enter the totals for staff costs, overhead, working expenses and the total cost of research. The totals entered must match the totals in the uploaded budget form.

Unacceptable peer reviewers

You can identify up to two individuals who are not acceptable as peer reviewers for the application. Click the 'Update' button to enter the name, organisation, and reason for exclusion. You will need to provide this information by **1 pm on 12 February 2026**.

Objectives and milestones

Objectives and milestones are assessed, included in a resulting research contract, and used for contract monitoring in progress and end of contract reports. Objectives and milestones must be measurable and achievable within the term of a contract.

<u>Objectives</u>

Briefly describe the intended objectives of your proposed research. Objectives should relate to the overall goal or aim of the research. The HRC suggests a minimum of three objectives, with sufficient standalone operational detail and scientific information to assess your performance in subsequent years.

All objectives must be added before milestones can be added. There is no limit to the number of objectives and milestones.

<u>Milestones</u>

Provide key milestones that you aim to achieve by the end of each year of a resulting contract. Each milestone must relate to one or more of the objectives previously added.

> **Note:** For contract monitoring and HRC accountability reporting, if your research requires biosafety, regulatory, human or animal ethical consents, or clinical trial registration, these must be identified as separate Year 1 milestones, even if you expect to gain these consents before starting the proposed research.
>
> Please refer to your institution's policies or the website of the Health and Disability Ethics Committees for further guidance.
>
> All HRC funded research is eligible for review by the Health and Disability Ethics Committees.

Example milestones:

Year	Milestone	Objective(s)
1	Gain ethics approval	Objective 1
1	Complete data collection, and analysis	Objective 1
1	Annual hui with community and health provider stakeholders	Objective 2
1	Development of tool concept	Objective 2
2	Participants interviews completed	Objective 1
2	Hui with product investment stakeholders	Objective 3
2	Annual hui with community and health provider stakeholders	Objective 2
2	Delivery of regional wānanga to disseminate research findings	All objectives

3.3 Module 2: Research

Section 2A: Host organisation information

Host organisation structure and capability

Provide information about the proposed host organisation, including its general purpose and function. Include details about the organisation's governance structure and how the organisation will support Māori leadership throughout the research.

Describe how the host organisation fits the definition of a Māori-facing organisation. What demonstrable commitments has the organisation made to building science and innovation capability within the Māori economy or for the benefit of Māori communities? Briefly outline established relationships the organisation has that will actively support the growth of Māori research capability and enable effective engagement with Māori communities, knowledge systems, and priorities.

Provide details of any other partner organisations that are participating in the proposed activity, such as industry and/or health provider organisations, and the role of the host organisation in fostering these relationships.

Briefly indicate what types of support the host organisation and partner(s) can provide to the team to support the proposed activities, including the provision of information, resources, or personnel to support the capability development aspects of the research.

Describe the organisation's internal capability to carry out research, such as scientific research qualification/s or equivalent demonstrated research experience in the science sector.

Section 2B: Summary of proposed research (1-page limit)

This section should clearly summarise the research proposal. Reviewers use this section to get an overview of your application and as a quick reference. Include all the important points of your application but keep this section to only **one page** long. Use the suggested headings and add subheadings if required.

Section 2C: Description of proposed research (7-page limit, excluding references)

> **Note:** The section headings provided in the application form must be used, as they correspond to the assessment criteria for the He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant applications.

Your audience includes discipline-specific and more broadly experienced assessing committee members. Therefore, not all members will have specialist knowledge of your research topic. It is in your best interest to structure your writing clearly and logically. Using graphics and tables is an efficient use of space (please ensure font type and size are easily legible). Ideally, seek feedback from a colleague outside your immediate research area. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the scoring criteria.

Ensure that the format of graphics is compatible with PDF conversion software.

Fit with investment objectives

Describe how your proposed research meets the fund objectives to improve Māori health outcomes through biomedical and clinical health research, grow Māori research capability and capacity and foster partnerships and collaborations.

Consider the following when responding to this section:

- Clearly present the research question and the research aims to indicate the purpose of the proposed research activities.

- Clearly outline what the specific health issue is to be addressed (e.g., cardiovascular disease, asthma in children) and how your research will improve health outcomes for Māori.

- Provide an overview of the intended impacts of your research, i.e. who are the next users or end users of your research? How will the proposed research produce timely, actionable evidence with clear pathways to clinical application, improved Māori health outcomes (including health system performance), and economic benefit (including through commercialisation).

- If the research includes a focus on social determinants of health, describe how these are clearly integrated within the biomedical and/or clinical research components.

- Provide an overview of the science and Māori health research capability that will be developed by your proposed research. How will these capabilities contribute to capacity building for the Māori health research workforce and/or capability within Māori-facing organisations. Outline the strategies you have in place to meaningfully support this growth and develop strong Māori health research leadership now and in the future. **Note**: there is a specific question in the 'Research impact' section about the impact of the capability development components for the host organisation.

- Discuss how the research will build and maintain relationships and partnerships between Māori-facing organisations, Māori health researchers and communities with industry and/or health providers to enhance translation and uptake of research findings.

Research design and methods

Provide sufficient details so the assessing committee can consider the feasibility, appropriateness, robustness and innovativeness of your proposed research.

Consider the following when responding to this section:

- Provide a clear timeline for your research. Clearly state what will be done, how, by whom, where and when.

- Detail the study methodology and proposed methods of data collection and analysis. Where appropriate, provide power calculations, an estimate of the likely effect size and the sample size required to detect this (power analysis). The HRC recommends involving a statistician in this process.

- Outline your plans for the management and monitoring of data collection and analysis, such as ethical data collection protocols and Māori data governance considerations.

- Provide details of participant characteristics and how participants will be recruited and engaged throughout the study.

- Include details of any potential ethical issues and how these will be managed.

- Provide details of how the study design will enable protection of mātauranga Māori throughout the research and in the future.

- Clinical trial applications should include a description of statistical guidelines for early termination and a description of data and safety monitoring arrangements, where appropriate. See the SPIRIT 2025 Statement for guidance on rigor and completeness of clinical trial proposals.

- Basic science applications are encouraged to provide control data to help the assessing committee. In addition, please provide evidence that mouse models have been generated (even if not in-house) and are viable if transgenic/knock out mice.

- If your research is patent-protected, provide the patent number and a summary of information available (if no technical information can be provided).

The HRC provides an independent data monitoring committee that has appropriate trial-specific expertise and follows best international practice if required. For general information on trial monitoring and the HRC Data Monitoring Core Committee (DMCC), see http://www.hrc.govt.nz/about-us/committees/data-monitoring-core-committee.

Research impact

This section builds on the impact and capability development strategies outlined in the 'Fit with investment objectives' section. This section should provide specific details on **how** your research will be used to enable improvements in Māori health outcomes, contribute to the New Zealand economy, and specific actions you will take to maximise uptake of your research into a clinical or health care setting within the short-medium term (3-5 years). Refer to the HRC's Research Impact Assessment slideshow for additional guidance on completing this section.[5]

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[5]Consult the HRC's Research Impact Assessment slideshow for further discussion on the types of benefits that can arise from health research, and where these benefits might be expected to occur along a pathway to impact.

What specific activities will you undertake throughout the life of the grant to maximise the use and impact of your research?

Describe the targeted actions that have been, or will be, taken to improve the likelihood of research uptake and impact, and to ensure that the next users or end users can meaningfully contribute to, and/or benefit from, the research. Your action plan should include activities that will enable short- to medium- term (3-5 years) translation of your research.

If your research has clear commercial potential to develop solutions and innovations that will improve health outcomes, provide specific details of the commercialisation pathway here.

If your research will lead to application within a clinical or health care setting to improve health outcomes, provide specific details of the application pathway here.

While not all research funded through this fund will need to have a direct commercialisation or clinical/health care setting application pathway, all applications must demonstrate a line of sight to producing economic benefit(s) for the health system. This can be through contributing new ideas, innovations, knowledge and/or health technology to support the health system to deliver better outcomes. The intended economic benefits should be described here.

Describe other planned dissemination activities that are designed to reach broader audiences. Who can enable the uptake of your research, and how have they been involved in your research? Identify uncertainties to uptake, or systematic/institutional barriers, and your mitigation strategies (where relevant).

Describe how your collaborations and/or partnerships with industry and/or health providers will support the translation and uptake of the research.

What elements of the team's track record of knowledge transfer provide confidence in the likelihood of research uptake? For example: existing links, relationships, or networks with relevant research next-users or end-users; demonstrable examples of knowledge mobilisation, or changes in health outcomes or societal impact generated from similar research. This component is considered relative to opportunity.

What impact will the Māori health research capability development components of the research have for the host organisation and for the Māori health research workforce?

Building on the capability development strategies identified in your 'Fit with investment objectives' section, describe the impact the proposed capability development will have for the host organisation. Identify the mechanisms put in place by the host organisation to support this capability development and Māori research leadership within the organisation. Provide details of how the capability development will grow Māori health research capability and capacity, now and in the future.

Māori health advancement

In line with the key objectives of this fund, the research team should consider all potential ways in which their application will advance Māori health and outline what actions they will undertake to help achieve this potential.

Assessment of Māori health advancement will explicitly consider two components:

- An outline of contributions the research will make to advancing Māori health.
- Specific actions that have been, and will be, undertaken to realise the contribution to advancing Māori health through the life of the research and also beyond it.

Researchers are encouraged to consider the four domains of Māori health advancement (see the Māori Health Advancement Guidelines for more details) during the development of their

research, as this may identify aspects of the research not previously considered. It is not a requirement that all four domains are specifically addressed in the application, but researchers are advised to consider each in formulating the strongest rationale for the application.

Alignment of the response to the 'Māori health advancement' criterion and other assessment criteria will strengthen an application.

How will the outcomes of your research contribute to Māori health advancement?

Provide a realistic description of how this research will contribute to improved Māori health outcomes or reductions in inequity over time. Consideration should be given to potential short-term and/or longer-term Māori health gains, within the specific context of the research and where it is positioned along the research pathway (cf. potential 'line of sight' or 'pathway' to impact). In addition, more immediate users and beneficiaries of the research who can utilise the research findings for Māori health gain should be identified.

What activities have the host organisation and research team already undertaken (that are relevant to this research), and what will be undertaken during the research, that will realise your research contribution to Māori health advancement?

Describe specific actions that have been, and will be, undertaken (from the development of the research idea through to the completion of the research) to maximise the likelihood that this research will contribute to Māori health advancement. Outline actions taken to ensure that the next users or beneficiaries of the research can utilise the findings for Māori health gain.

Outline the steps the host organisation has taken, or will take, to advance Māori health, support Māori research capability development and leadership, and establish meaningful, collaborative, and reciprocal relationships with Māori communities.

Where relevant, identify barriers to actioning your aspirations for advancing Māori health and your mitigation strategies.

Expertise and capability of the research team

In addition to the technical research expertise, consider the expertise required to meet the objectives of this fund when assembling a research team. This includes Māori health research and mātauranga Māori expertise to meaningfully support Māori research capability development; economic and commercialisation expertise to support translation of research findings; and genuine connections with industry and/or health providers to support the uptake of the findings.

Clearly define the team's mix of expertise, appropriate networks and collaborations; history of productivity and delivery; and the appropriateness of the research environment/infrastructure to deliver the research, build capability and disseminate results.

Justify the role of each team member (i.e. named investigators). Highlight important skills, expertise and previous collaborations in the team that would support the delivery of the proposed research.

A CV must be provided on HRC Gateway for all named investigators to help the assessing committee determine whether their expertise is appropriate and necessary. The committee will consider the FTE of senior investigators on each proposal and weight their scoring on the expertise and track record of the research team accordingly.

The HRC recognises that applicants with experience in sectors other than public sector research may have gained valuable expertise or produced outputs (e.g. patents) relevant to

research translation, and this may have limited the applicant's opportunity to produce more traditional research outputs.

The research team proposed in the application must be included in any subsequent contract.

3.4 Module 3: References

Please start this module on a new page. There is no page limit.

Citations for key references in the text in Module 2 should be supplied. Details must include a full list of all authors, the title of article, journal, year, volume and page numbers. Endnote lists must be copied into a plain text editor before pasting it in this section. Place an asterisk beside named investigators' publications.

A glossary of Māori terms used in the application with a brief translation can be included here.

3.5 Module 4: Contract information and Budget

Sections 4A-4C are part of the **2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant Application Form.**

Section 4D includes letters of collaboration/supporting documents/memorandums of understanding. These documents will need to be uploaded to HRC Gateway; a list of uploaded documents will be automatically generated under Module 4D.

Sections 4E-4G should be completed in the separate Microsoft Excel budget spreadsheet – **2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Budget Form**.

Please complete all modules and then upload the budget form as both **.xlsx and PDF formats** to your application in HRC Gateway.

Section 4A: Justification of expenses

Justification of research staff

Justify the role and FTE of the named investigators and any other research staff listed in Section 4E (Research Proposal Budget) and Section 4G (FTE Summary). Please include the following (if applicable):

- An explanation of each person's role (named or unnamed, funded or not funded by the proposal), who will be actively associated with the research. These may be research assistants, technicians, medical staff, interviewers and support staff or similar, whose names or position titles are listed in the budget under 'research staff' and who have specific FTE involvements. Time-only staff require clear justification.
- Named postdoctoral fellows should be included as named investigators and provide their CVs.
- Evidence that biostatisticians, data managers and health economists are integrated into the team as appropriate, e.g. sufficient FTE is allocated for each year of the contract.
- Whether a role is involved in mentoring junior team members.

Funding requests may be declined for roles that are not fully justified or are only described as a 'training opportunity' without details of alignment with the fund scope. It is your responsibility to ensure that no personnel in this section will exceed 100% FTE of their combined

commitments during the term of the contract. The roles of students and casual staff should be justified in the next section, 'Justification of working expenses and casual staff'.

Justification of working expenses and casual staff

All items listed under 'Materials and research expenses' in the budget should be justified. Provide costs per item unit and full costs per item for the number of units requested. Costs associated with knowledge transfer activities can be included. Quotes must be provided to support discretionary costs, where available.

The assessing committee will consider the appropriateness of the budget and working expenses. If there are exceptional requests for working expenses, ensure they can clearly understand why the requested materials, travel, research tools or significant one-line items are necessary.

Justify the roles of students and casual staff so that the assessing committee can appreciate how these individuals are necessary for the proposed research. For students, stipends must be included at the per annum values approved by the HRC: $30,000 for PhD students, $20,000 for master's students and up to $7,500 for summer students, or pro-rata for part-time students.

Students should be named if they have been identified at the time of application, along with a description of how their expertise relates to their role. Unnamed students can be included in the application budget, e.g. "PhD student (not yet appointed)". Once you have appointed an unnamed student, please advise the HRC of the student's name and relevant expertise. If you include an unnamed student, you cannot include any information about your intention to recruit and appoint a student with any particular expertise or other characteristic, such as ethnicity or gender. Any such detail on unnamed students is considered unjustified and will be disregarded in the assessment process.

It is your responsibility to ensure that students do not exceed 100% FTE on their combined commitments with the host organisation during the term of the contract.

Section 4B: Previous/Current contracts and awards

Using the table provided, outline current and previous funding contracts from any agency that have been received in the last 5 years by **the first named investigator (and co-first named investigator if applicable) as principal investigator**. Copy the table and repeat for each received grant as required. This section provides the HRC reviewers and assessing committees with an overall summary of your abilities to secure funding for research.

For 'Nature of support', indicate whether the funding supports salaries only, working expenses only, both salary and working expenses, equipment, a junior research fellow, etc.

Note: You can replace the table with an Excel spreadsheet. If doing so, please use the same layout as the original table.

Section 4C: Other support

Other research applications awaiting decisions

List any relevant research applications pending with other funders that might alter the grant's budget. If applicable, indicate in the spaces provided any overlap (research, resources and personnel) that the listed application might have with this application. By providing this information, you agree that the HRC may seek clarification details from the other funders if required.

Co-funding

Provide details if you have approached other funders to co-fund this research. If applicable, detail the joint funding arrangements.

Financial or other interests

For the purposes of HRC processes, a financial interest is anything of economic value, including relationships with entities outside of the research host organisation. Examples of financial interests include positions such as consultant, director, officer, partner or manager of an entity (whether paid or unpaid), salaries, consulting income, honoraria, gifts, loans and travel payments. A financial conflict may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the individual's professional judgment in conducting, assessing or reporting research.

Examples of other interests include aligning with special interest groups seeking to advance or promote a particular worldview or policy.

Please disclose and provide details of any significant relationship to third parties (e.g. commercial sector entities contributing to research costs, equipment, staff joint appointments). Clearly describe how the current application relates to those relationships.

If you can identify financial or other interests in your funding application, outline the specific details of your proposed conflict management strategy. Assessing commercial links is not part of the HRC peer review process.

Section 4D: Letters of collaboration/support documents

Any additional documentation (including subcontracts/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), letters of collaboration/support) should be uploaded as separate PDF files under 'Letters of collaboration/support documents' on HRC Gateway.

HRC Gateway will automatically generate a list of uploaded documents.

A letter of collaboration should outline how the interested party intends to implement the findings of the research upon its completion, or provide material or actual support for the research, **not simply state that the research is necessary**. Please ensure that any organisation providing a letter of collaboration recognises their intended commitment to conduct the proposed research and the timeline of their involvement.

Your application should contain all the information necessary for assessment without the need to refer to additional documentation. Supplementary materials, such as slides, protocols, and other funding applications, should not be included. Any additional documents containing information beyond the main body of the application may be removed at HRC's discretion.

You can upload up to 15 letters of collaboration/support documents. Your uploaded documents will be added to the end of your application.

Section 4E: Research proposal budget

The budget spreadsheet in Section 4E can be used for different types of applications. Select 'He Ara Whakahihiko Hauora' from the drop-down list. Further instructions are contained in the Notes tab of the file.

The guidelines below are a summary of the HRC's funding rules. For more information, please refer to the HRC Rules.

Budget calculations and spreadsheet

All calculations should be **GST exclusive and in whole dollar amounts**, i.e. no cents or decimals.

Section 4E includes the total research staff FTE and salary, total research working expenses, the host organisation's overhead rate, and the total cost of research. The spreadsheet automatically calculates these totals. Do not enter details into the shaded cells, as these are completed automatically. Insert more rows into the table, if required.

> **Note:** Ensure the 'total cost of research' is within the budget limit outlined in **Section 1.2.**

FTE and Salary

Only enter **named investigators** and **contract research staff** employed or to be employed by the host organisation (including academics) in this section.

For each individual, specify their grade/level, FTE and salary; time only is permissible. The monetary value ($) should be the **actual** salary amount that the named staff member is expected to receive for their part of the research proposed each year.

The budget form does not accept FTE less than 3%. The HRC assessing committees do not favour listing numerous investigators with a very low FTE, and salary requests should only be for significant input and involvement in the research. Advisory groups of contributors, who have FTE commitments of less than 3%, may be justified and included as research working expenses ('advisory group fees').

Salary associated costs (i.e. the employer's contribution to approved superannuation schemes and accident compensation levies) should be entered in the 'Research working expenses' section.

Materials and research expenses

The direct costs of the research include all the disbursements that can be identified, justified and charged to a contract. Estimates of costs should be expressed in current prices **exclusive of GST.**

Costs may include the following:

- Research consumables (these should be itemised at the current cost per unit and full cost for the number required).

- Other costs **directly** related to the research (e.g. telephone calls/communications, mail and freight).

- Computer-related license fees for research-specific software; access to High Performance Computing infrastructure (NeSI).

- Minor research equipment (to a total of $5,000).

- A proportionate part of new specialised equipment (equipment to be acquired) may be included and justified on research applications (upload any budgetary supportive documents separately on HRC Gateway as supporting documents).

- Depreciation on specialised equipment if your host organisation's auditors have certified that it will be excluded from your organisation's overhead rate. This cost must be justified in your application and supporting documentation should be uploaded to

HRC Gateway. For all other equipment, depreciation and capital costs are included in your organisation's overhead rate.

- Expenses relating to research participants.

- Costs associated with knowledge transfer activities.

- Travel costs **directly** related to conducting the research. Contract funds may be used to assist with overseas travel provided the HRC is satisfied that this travel is directly relevant to conducting the research and that alternative funding sources are not available. This is not intended to relieve your host organisation of its obligation to assist with the costs of overseas travel by its employees.

- Disseminating research results. Contract funds can be used to pay fair and reasonable charges to publish HRC-sponsored research in journals, reports, monographs or books. Also, costs incurred from other forms of dissemination, such as meeting with community groups or conference dissemination, can be claimed if reasonable and justified.

- Conference allowance: the maximum allowance for conference attendance is $1,000 per annum per named investigator if **fully supported at 100% FTE** by the grant and must be fully justified. The allowance cannot be distributed proportionately between grants. This allowance is distinct from the cost to disseminate findings from this proposed research; this cost must also be fully justified. Fares and allowances should be calculated following the host organisation's regulations and scales.

> **Note:** If you intend to ask the HRC's Data Monitoring Core Committee (DMCC) to monitor this study, there is no cost involved. However, your application must include adequate provision for statistical support to provide the DMCC with all data and analysis they request to carry out their monitoring including the preparation of biannual statistical reports. Also, costs for members of the study team (including the study statistician) to attend the meetings need to be included in the application's budget. If you have any questions, please contact the DMCC secretary at dmcc@hrc.govt.nz.

Casual staff

Casual staff (those persons without an ongoing role or commitment to the research but providing one-off services to the research on a part-time, hourly or per diem basis, e.g. interviewers) should also be requested under 'Research working expenses'.

Postgraduate student costs

Costs for stipends can be requested for master's and PhD students under 'Research working expenses'. Stipends must be included at the HRC-approved rates (master's $20,000 per annum; PhD $30,000 per annum).

Both named and unnamed students can be included; in both cases, describe the student's research project/contribution to the research activity in Section 4A. Students should be named if they have been identified at the time of application. Unnamed students can be included in the application budget as e.g. "PhD student (not yet appointed)". The HRC must be advised of the student's name once appointed.

Funding for stipends will be conditional upon the host organisation arranging a tax-free stipend that satisfies the Inland Revenue Department and host organisation's rules.

> **Note**: Students' fees and thesis costs cannot be claimed.

Subcontract/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) budget

Subcontracted staff are those who are not employees of the host organisation. The salaries for these staff and all other expenses requested for the subcontract (e.g. working expenses) should be broken down into appropriate categories on a detailed subcontract/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the host organisation and non-host organisation using 'Section 4F' of the budget spreadsheet.

Enter the subcontract/MOU total, **exclusive of GST**, under 'Subcontract MOU budget' for each year. The total figure should be all-inclusive, including overhead calculations for salaries.

> **Note:** the HRC does not cover overheads for overseas-based organisations.

If a subcontract/MOU budget is more than $50,000, all expenses requested should be broken down into the appropriate categories in Section 4F of the budget spreadsheet (MOU budget).

Please provide MOUs for time-only subcontracted staff who are not employed by the host organisation. If MOUs cannot be provided by the application deadline, you can include a letter of support that describes the individual's role and level of involvement. If your application is successful, copies of MOUs that were not provided for any time-only individuals may be required at the contracting stage.

Please upload all MOUs and letters of support as separate PDF files on HRC Gateway. Refer to 'Section 4D: Letters of collaboration/support documents' for further details.

Salary associated costs

Amounts requested for the employer's contribution to approved superannuation schemes and accident compensation levies for research staff should be entered in the 'research working expenses' section. Enter the amounts for each year separately in the budget form. The percentage rates for both ACC and superannuation should be noted for each individual (and justified in Section 4A where required, i.e. for non-standard rates).

International expenses

The HRC does not contribute to the overhead of overseas investigators. The total proportion of the contract budget allocated to overseas investigators must not exceed 20%.

> **Note:** Overheads will be paid at a negotiated rate for each institution on all eligible contracts. If your organisation does not have a negotiated overhead rate, please enter a rate that will cover business expenses not directly related to the cost of undertaking the proposed activity, e.g., office rental fees, power etc. Please contact the HRC if you are unsure of what an appropriate rate is.

Total cost of research

Enter the appropriate overhead rate (OHR) in the budget. Seek advice from your host organisation's research office on the costing of your application and the overhead rate negotiated with the HRC.

After entering the appropriate overhead rate, the total cost of the research will be automatically calculated. Enter the staff costs, overheads, working expenses and total cost of research from the budget form into the HRC Gateway section named 'Research costs'.

Section 4F: Subcontract MOU budget

If a substantial proportion of the total budget is contained in a subcontract/MOU, the expenditure must be itemised in the same way as the overall research proposal budget (see above).

Use Section 4F to provide budget details for all MOUs requesting more than $50,000; add a copy of Section 4F for each subcontractor. Use the overhead rate for the subcontracted staff member's host organisation, not your host organisation. The total dollar amount for each year should then be entered under 'Working expenses – subcontracts' in Section 4E of the budget spreadsheet.

Upload a copy of the signed subcontract/MOU to HRC Gateway as a supporting document.

A CV must also be provided in Module 5 for all named investigators on MOUs to help the assessing committee determine whether their expertise is appropriate and necessary. Without this information, the assessing committee may not support the budget for the MOU. CVs are not needed for employees of commercial enterprises providing service for fees.

If there are no subcontracts/MOUs for this application, or none requesting more than $50,000, you can ignore Section 4F.

Section 4G: FTE summary

When completing this section, please:

- List the time involvement of **all** personnel (including those on a subcontract/MOU) in full-time equivalents, e.g. 10% FTE. Half percentages (e.g. 4.5%) are not allowed. Ensure the FTE figures match the budget, MOU budget sections (Sections 4F and 4G), and Module 1.
- Give all names. Unnamed positions can be indicated as 'technician', 'research nurse', 'postdoctoral fellow', etc.
- Indicate when named investigators are time-only (i.e. not receiving salary for their involvement in the research).
- Identify all postgraduate students by masters or PhD.

Note: For successful applications, host organisations will need to provide written confirmation that all research staff named and paid, in full or in part, from the funding provided will be given sufficient workload relief to fulfil the research contract objectives and milestones (Principles of full cost funding).

3.6   Module 5: NZ Standard CV

Upload a CV for all named investigators (including those on a Memorandum of Understanding). HRC Gateway will automatically compile CVs under Module 5 of your application.

CVs must be prepared using the NZ Standard CV template. Please use the default font and stay within the page limits. The HRC will not accept any other forms of CV.

The information provided in your CV **must match** the information provided elsewhere in the application and in your HRC Gateway profile.

Your CV may indicate when career breaks (including pandemic-related disruptions) have taken place as your track record will be assessed relative to opportunity.

3.7 Module 6: Research classification

Click the 'Update' button on HRC Gateway next to each of the classifications required.

This information is for HRC data collection purposes only.

Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC)

Categorise the proposed research using the ANZSRC codes for the Fields of Research (FOR) and Socioeconomic Objective (SEO). Enter the percentage to the nearest 10% for each category to a total of 100%.

Keywords

Enter keywords that categorise the research.

Economic benefits

Briefly describe any wider economic benefits that may arise from your research. If you do not expect any beyond those already identified in your application, please state this here rather than leaving the field blank. Distinct from the scope of this fund, the HRC's interpretation of economic benefits is broad and includes:

- contributing to maintaining a healthy and productive population
- contributing to an efficient and cost-effective health system, and
- value generated from IP and innovation.

Health issues

Enter the requested information on HRC Gateway. Select the health issue that best describes your research and, if required, one secondary health issue.

Mapping category

Select the category that best describes the starting point for your research. The following table provides a description of each category.

Mapping category	Description
Biomedical	
Gene	Research into the genetic basis of disease or identification of genes involved. Linkage analysis falls here and not under clinical studies.
Cell biology	Analysis of molecular-level interactions. This includes protein-protein interactions, determination of the function of genes involved in diseases, and whole cell studies (e.g. immunological studies, transfections, etc).
Physiology	All physiology and anatomy, including animal models of disease and studies on host-pathogen interactions.
Diagnostics	Innovations and the development/refinement of new or existing diagnostic tools.
Pharmaceuticals /treatments	The development of new pharmaceuticals (drug design and development), as well as new treatments for diseases (e.g. vaccines, other therapies).
Clinical	
Clinical studies	Research involving human subjects. This excludes research in which samples from human subjects are used for fundamental biomedical research, such as genetic linkage analyses.
Clinical trials	Randomised clinical trials, usually randomised controlled clinical trials.
Health services	
Health economics	Research into the cost-effectiveness of treatments/services, etc.
Clinical services	This includes primary and secondary care services. Access to and appropriateness of services are also included, and safety of services and compensation. Macro-level analysis of health system changes falls into this area.
Public health	
Knowledge resources	All epidemiology, underpinning social science (qualitative and quantitative), development of tools and new methodologies, and development of indicators.
Risk factors	Research linking life experiences, behaviours, exposures etc. with health outcomes.
Interventions	Research that includes the design and evaluation of interventions.
At-risk populations	Includes research on specific population groups. These groups may be based on age, ethnicity, occupation, etc. Includes research using diagnostics in a particular group.
Community services	Research around community-run services and community groups, e.g. marae-based healthcare services.

Appendix 1: Application assessment process

1. Assessment of He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant applications

1.1 Assessing committee membership

All eligible He Ara Whakahihiko - Hauora Grant applications will be assessed by the He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora assessing committee ('the committee'). The committee membership will comprise of all Māori and/or indigenous researchers, and will include a broad range of expertise across health, biomedical, clinical, health delivery, research, tikanga, mātauranga Māori, and Kaupapa Māori research.

The HRC seeks to match an assessing committee's expertise to the research fields of the applications they are considering, taking into account potential conflicts of interest.

1.2 Conflict of interest management

To minimise potential conflicts of interest, the HRC has specific guidance for assessing committee membership.

> Anyone who is a **first named investigator** or a **named investigator** on an application should not sit on the committee that is reviewing their application. However, they may sit on or chair a different committee.

All assessing committee members are required to declare all potential conflicts of interest on HRC Gateway before they can access any application-related information. These declarations are then reviewed by HRC staff in accordance with the HRC Management of Interests Policy.

1.3 Assessment process

1.3.1. Pre-meeting triage process (if required)

Depending on the number of applications received, a triage process may be utilised prior to the committee meeting to determine which applications will be discussed in full at the committee meeting. If utilised, this process will involve the following:

- Committee members score applications before the meeting using the scoring criteria and anchor point descriptors provided in Appendix 2.
- These scores will be used to produce a list of applications, ranked by total average score.
- As confirmed by the Chair(s), the lowest-ranked applications will be triaged and will not proceed to the next stages of the assessment process.
- Applicants will be advised of this outcome at the specified results date advertised on the 2026 He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Fund information page on HRC Gateway.
- Triaged applications will not receive any committee feedback.

1.3.2. Assessing committee assessment meeting

The committee will meet to discuss and score applications, based on the scoring criteria and anchor point descriptors provided in Appendix 2. This process will involve the following:

- Each committee member will independently and confidentially score applications against each of the assessment criteria.
- Committee member scores will be averaged and totalled to provide a total average score for each application.

- A ranked list of applications will be compiled and presented to the committee for their consideration.
- Based on their discussion and the total average score for each proposal, the committee will determine which applications are fundable. The committee can also recommend proposals for conditional funding, contingent on applicants addressing specific feedback and/or meeting the specified conditions.

1.4   Funding decisions – HRC Council

The assessing committees' recommendations of fundable applications are presented to the Council who make the final funding decision, taking into consideration available investment budget, and other relevant information, including information relating to HRC's stated requirements for funding, to support their decision making.

1.5   Feedback to applicants

At the conclusion of the funding round, applications that were assessed at the committee meeting will receive a review summary, which is a brief overview of the committee's discussion (Appendix 3: Assessing committee review summary template). The intent of the review summary is to provide the applicant with a brief, balanced, objective statement of the committee's response to the research application.

Review summaries should be constructive and may include:

- key strengths of the application
- key areas for improvement and/or further consideration
- other comments (e.g. budgets, FTE, objectives).

Review summaries will not include details of specific scores or the identity of assessing committee members.

Individual outcomes will be available on HRC Gateway and will also be forwarded to the research office/host organisation of the applicant, if applicable.

Please note: applications not discussed at an assessing committee meeting do not receive written feedback.

Appendix 2: Scoring criteria and anchor point descriptors

Criteria for assessing and scoring He Ara Whakahihiko – Hauora Grant applications by the assessing committee

The 7-point word ladder containing criteria descriptors is considered against each of the following assessment outlines below (listed A-E).

Notes:

- The 'Adequate' anchor point is 3 points.

- Applicants do not necessarily have to address all the points in the outlines below; they are included to help guide assessment under each of the scoring categories.

Score	Criteria descriptor
7	Exceptional
6	Excellent
5	Very good
4	Good
3	Adequate
2	Unsatisfactory
1	Poor

Scoring criteria	Points	%score
Fit with Investment Objectives	7	20%
Research design and methods	7	20%
Research impact	7	20%
Māori health advancement	7	20%
Expertise and capability of the research team	7	20%
Total	**35**	**100%**

A.	**Fit with investment objectives**

The research is innovative, worthwhile, and justifiable to New Zealand and aligns with the objectives of the fund because:

- it contributes to improving Māori health outcomes through biomedical or clinical health research
- it will produce timely, actionable evidence with clear pathways to clinical application and economic benefit
- it outlines clear strategies for growing Māori health research capability and a pathway to Māori research leadership
- it will foster partnerships and collaborations between the research team and industry and/or health providers to enhance translation and uptake of research findings within a clinical or healthcare setting.

B.	**Research design and methods**

The study has been well designed to answer the research question(s) because it demonstrates:

- a comprehensive and feasible study design that is achievable within the timeframe
- appropriate study design and methodology to address the objectives of the research
- an appropriate study design to support the protection of mātauranga Māori and/or intellectual property creation, where applicable
- evidence of availability of research materials/samples
- sound data management, data monitoring arrangements and patient safety issue management.

C.	Research impact

The proposed research is likely to add value and benefit Māori and New Zealand because:

- applicants have described a credible pathway for how their research will enable commercial pathways for solutions and innovations and/or clinical application, contributing to both improved health outcomes and economic impact
- an action plan and specific activities to maximise the use and benefits of the research in the short to medium term (3-5 years) has been described
- there are established networks, collaborations and/or partnerships with industry and/or health providers to enhance translation and uptake of research findings
- it describes the intended development of Māori health research capability and the impact this will have for the host organisation.

D.	Māori health advancement

The proposed research is likely to advance Māori health because:

- Applicants have described how their research could lead to improved Māori health or reductions in health inequity over time.
- The research team and host organisation are undertaking activities to address Māori health advancement, as appropriate to the nature and scope of the research. This should include, but is not limited to, activities such as:
    - establishing meaningful, collaborative, and reciprocal relationships with Māori
    - undertaking research that addresses Māori health need and inequity
    - forming appropriate research teams
    - developing current and future workforce capacity and capability, including upskilling of research team members
    - adhering to culturally appropriate research practices and principles (as appropriate to the context of the research).

E.	Expertise and capability of the research team

The team, relative to opportunity, can achieve the proposed outcomes and impacts because they have demonstrated:

- Appropriate qualifications and the right mix and balance of FTEs, expertise and experience to meet the objectives of the fund, including but not limited to:
    - capability and competencies to meaningfully support Māori health research capability building,
    - economic and commercialisation expertise,
    - mātauranga Māori expertise to guide research and support capability development (as appropriate to the context of the research).
- The host organisation's internal capability to carry out science, innovation and technology through a history of productivity and delivery on previous research funding.

Appendix 3: Assessing committee review summary

HRC reference #		Applicant surname	
Research title			
Host organisation			

Note to committee reviewers (CR): Carefully consider the information and wording provided below. This will be useful for both successful applicants (in helping to shape their research) and for unsuccessful applicants (in preparing future research applications). Comments should be clear and concise, reflect the committee's discussion, and fit on a single page. Aim for a total of 4-6 bullet points. (Please delete this text before you submit the completed form to the HRC.)

With regard to the criteria for assessing and scoring research applications:

1.   **The assessing committee noted the following key strengths of the application**

2.   **The assessing committee noted the following aspects that could be improved and/or considered further**

3.   **Other comments/suggestions (e.g. budgets, FTE, objectives)**