Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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

2026 Programme Grant Application Guidelines

August 2025

Use with the 2026 Programme Grant Application Form

Table of Contents

PART 1: 2026 HRC PROGRAMME GRANT – KEY INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS 5

1.1 DESCRIPTION 5

1.2 HEALTH RESEARCH PRIORITIES (NEW) 5

1.3 HRC REQUIREMENTS (NEW) 5

1.4 CHANGES THIS YEAR (NEW) 7

1.5 RESEARCH PROGRAMME ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS 7

1.6 VALUE 8

1.7 PROGRAMME CATEGORIES 8

1.8 ELIGIBILITY 8

Programme director requirements 9

Programme team requirements 9

1.9 NEGOTIATION OF CONTRACT DETAILS 10

1.10 KEY DATES 10

Creation deadline (NEW) 10

Submission deadline 10

1.11 APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW 11

PART 2: GENERAL RULES FOR 2026 PROGRAMME GRANT APPLICATIONS 12

2.1 PREPARATION 12

HRC Gateway account 12

Before submitting an application 12

Application forms 12

Host organisations 12

Consents necessary to carry out research (NEW) 13

2.2 WRITING YOUR APPLICATION 13

General formatting 13

Application formatting compliance 13

Scope compliance 13

2.3 PRIVACY PROVISIONS 14

Statistical and reporting purposes 14

Personal information 14

Public announcements 14

Official Information Act 14

Enquiries 15

2.4 ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 15

Eligibility restrictions on publicly funded research 15

Trusted Research Guidance 15

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PART 3. INSTRUCTIONS ON COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING A 2026 PROGRAMME GRANT APPLICATION 16

3.1 THE PROGRAMME APPLICATION FORMS 16

3.2 MODULE 1: APPLICATION DETAILS, INVESTIGATORS, OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES 16

STEP 1 17

Application type/stream 17

Research title 17

Host organisation 17

STEP 2 17

Lay summary 17

Research location 18

Discipline 18

Duration 18

Type of research 18

Commencement date 18

Support personnel 18

STEP 3 18

First named investigator (director) 18

Named investigators 19

Collaborators (NEW) 19

Research costs 19

Unacceptable peer reviewers 19

Objectives and milestones 20

3.3 MODULE 2: RESEARCH 20

Section 2A: Summary of proposed research (1-page limit) 20

Section 2B: List of proposed research objectives or projects 20

Section 2C: Description of proposed research (16-page limit) 21

3.4 MODULE 3: REFERENCES 22

3.5 MODULE 4: CONTRACT INFORMATION AND BUDGET 22

Section 4A: Justification of expenses 22

Section 4B: Previous/current contracts and awards 23

Section 4C: Other support 24

Section 4D: Letters of collaboration/support documents 24

Section 4E: Research proposal budget 24

Section 4F: MOU budget 27

Section 4G: FTE summary 27

3.6 MODULE 5: NZ STANDARD CV (NEW) 27

3.7 MODULE 6: RESEARCH CLASSIFICATION 28

APPENDIX 1: PROGRAMME APPLICATION ASSESSMENT PROCESS 30

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1. Overview (NEW) 30
2. Assessing Programme applications 30
Assessing committee membership 30
Assessing committee meeting procedure 30
Assessing committee meeting scoring criteria: General Programmes 31
Scoring criteria – Rangahau Hauora Māori Programmes 31
3. The Programme Assessing Committee (PAC) 32
3.1 PAC shortlist 32
3.2 PAC meeting procedure 32
3.3 PAC scoring criteria 33
3.4 Recommendation of fundable applications 33
3.5 Funding decisions - Council 33
3.6 Feedback to applicants 33
4. Conflict of interest 34
5. Score normalisation 34

APPENDIX 2: ASSESSING COMMITTEE SCORING CRITERIA FOR GENERAL PROGRAMME GRANT APPLICATIONS 35

APPENDIX 3: ASSESSING COMMITTEE SCORING CRITERIA FOR RANGAHAU HAUORA MĀORI PROGRAMME APPLICATIONS 37

APPENDIX 4: PROGRAMME ASSESSING COMMITTEE SCORING CRITERIA FOR GENERAL AND RANGAHAU HAUORA MĀORI PROGRAMME APPLICATIONS 39

APPENDIX 5: APPLICATIONS INCLUDING RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIALS (RCTS) 41

APPENDIX 6: MĀORI HEALTH ADVANCEMENT CRITERION 42

APPENDIX 7: ASSESSING COMMITTEE REVIEW SUMMARY 43

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Part 1: 2026 HRC Programme Grant – key information and requirements

Part 1 sets out the requirements for the HRC Programme Grant, including:

- information about the health research priorities
- information about the grant, including the maximum value and duration
- eligibility criteria that applicants must meet
- an overview of the application process and requirements, including key dates
- an overview of the assessment process and assessment criteria.

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.

1.1 Description

The Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) Programme Grants support high-performing teams to undertake a programme of health research in an area of importance and priority for New Zealand.

Research programmes must have a clear strategic goal, with specific research objectives that can tangibly contribute to improved health outcomes in New Zealand and/or demonstrate the potential to make a significant breakthrough within a field of research. Meaningful collaboration with others to collectively achieve health gains and deliver maximum value for New Zealand's public investment in health research is strongly encouraged.

1.2 Health research priorities (NEW)

New Zealand's investment in health research must contribute to achieving the goals of the health system and the innovation, technology and science system.[1] The HRC is the principal government funder of health research.

For the health system, the Government is committed to improving health outcomes by providing New Zealanders with timely access to high-quality health services.[2] A key focus for the science system is to harness the benefits of research and innovation to drive economic transformation. The Government wants to ensure that the research it funds is progressing its priorities, and that they have a clear pathway to translate new ideas into successful commercial enterprise.[3] Therefore, it is important for researchers and research organisations to identify how research to be funded by the HRC will add value and contribute to these goals and wider system performance.

1. HRC requirements (NEW)

All HRC investment must have a clear line of sight to improving health outcomes for all New Zealanders.

HRC-funded research must meet the following requirements:

- Research must be focused on health and improving health outcomes and/or the health system, where health outcomes are defined as:
  a. absence or reduction of disease, symptoms or morbidity, and/or

[1] Letters of expectations for health statutory entities | Ministry of Health NZ
[2] The Government Policy Statement on Health (2024-2027) outlines five priority areas; five non-communicable diseases; five modifiable behaviours; five health targets; and five mental health targets.
[3] Going For Growth | Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

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b. timely access to quality healthcare, for all New Zealanders, including strengthening prevention of disease and injury, earlier diagnosis, earlier patient-specific (precision) intervention, and new and improved models of care, or medicines, treatments and cures, and/or
c. longer life expectancy, and/or
d. improved quality of life.

- Research into the causes of ill health, or the determinants of health (e.g. environmental, socio-economic, cultural, and behavioural factors) must demonstrate a pathway to improvements in health outcomes and/or the health system (as defined above).
- The research proposal provides an evidence base when describing areas of high health need and population groups with high health need.[4]

Council makes final decisions on funding, informed by the assessing committee recommendations and taking into consideration Government priorities and the balance of investments across our portfolio.

Please carefully read the 'in scope' and 'out of scope' guidance below before preparing your application.

In scope for the 2026 Programme Grants

Council will **prioritise opportunities to invest** in research that:

- maximises benefit for healthcare delivery, such as:
  - new models of care and treatments
  - improved effectiveness and efficiency
  - innovation and technology in healthcare, and/or
- demonstrates a pathway to commercialisation, and/or
- enhances the development of clinician-researchers,[5] and/or
- contributes to achievement of the health and/or mental health and addiction targets.[6]

Council funding decisions will align with current priorities to the greatest extent possible, subject to the proposals submitted in a particular funding round.

Out of scope for the 2026 Programme Grants

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

- 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[7]
- research that duplicates research already undertaken overseas (without articulating the additional value of undertaking it in New Zealand)
- social science research that focuses exclusively on determinants of health (e.g. environmental, socio-economic, cultural or behavioural factors) except where it demonstrates a pathway to improvements in health outcomes and/or the health system (see HRC requirements)
- basic research that focuses exclusively on mechanistic pathways except where it demonstrates a pathway to improvements in health outcomes and/or the health system (see HRC requirements).

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

[5] A clinician-researcher conducts research and provides clinical services in any setting, under formal work arrangement and is eligible to undertake clinical practice in New Zealand either under the Health Practitioners Competence Act 2003, through registration with the relevant responsible authority, or as a member of Allied Health Aotearoa New Zealand.

[6] The five health targets are: faster cancer treatment; improved immunisation for children; shorter stays in emergency departments; shorter wait times for first specialist assessment; and shorter wait times for elective treatment.
The five mental health and addiction targets are: faster access to specialist mental health and addiction services; faster access to primary mental health and addiction services; shorter mental health and addiction-related stays in emergency departments; increased mental health and addiction workforce development; and strengthened focus on prevention and early intervention.

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

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1.3 Changes this year (NEW)

The HRC has made changes to the application and assessment processes for the Programme round. Please carefully read these guidelines to ensure your application meets the requirements for this round.

The changes include:

- You must begin your application on HRC Gateway by the 'Application creation deadline' (1 pm on 31 October 2025). A list of named investigators and the application lay summary must also be provided by the creation deadline.
- Applications will be assessed on the full range of standard HRC score criteria. Please refer to Appendices 2-4 for further details.
- If your application aligns with one or more of the priorities outlined in Section 1.3, clearly articulate how in the most relevant sections of your application.
- There will be no external peer review or applicant rebuttal for Programme applications. Applications will continue to undergo peer review by full stage assessing committees, who will meet to discuss and score applications. Shortlisted applications will also be peer reviewed by the Programme Assessing Committee.
- The NZ Standard CV template has been updated. Please ensure the latest version of the CV template is used for submission. The new version is available to download on HRC Gateway.

1.4 Research programme essential components

Council's funding decisions are informed by the assessing committee recommendations, Government priorities and the balance of investments across our portfolio.

You should therefore ensure that your proposal demonstrates the following:

- **Strategic intent of the proposed research programme:** Council will look to invest in research that demonstrates strong alignment with health research priorities; clear potential for improving health outcomes and contributing to wider health and science system goals; and a collaborative approach to achieving health gains and maximum value for public investment in health research.
- **Qualifying research:** Programmes should represent a substantive and cohesive body of research, encompassed in a minimum of three distinct objectives addressing a common theme. Programme outcomes should be greater than the sum of three individual Project outcomes.
- **International competitiveness of the research:** it is important to demonstrate how your research is at the forefront of international research efforts, i.e. research areas in which New Zealand has a particular advantage or are at the 'leading edge' within their respective discipline.
- **Māori health advancement:** your research group's policies, general activities and research proposal with respect to Māori health advancement should be evident.
- **Research team:** named investigators should have an extensive track record of achievement (including peer-reviewed research contracts and publications). The HRC reviewers will consider the strength of each team member.
- **Collaboration:** engagement, collaboration and connection with others, where this will result in strengthening the impact, translation and uptake of your research is highly desirable.
- **Training:** opportunities to develop early career researchers and next programme leaders, provide research engagement opportunities for health professionals and develop the critical health research skills New Zealand needs should be developed and included within the programme.
- **Host organisation:** your research group should have strong support from your respective host organisation(s).

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2. Value

HRC Programme Grants have a 5-year term and a budget of up to $5,000,000. Your application will be withdrawn if it exceeds the budget limit.

The requested budget needs to be justified and reflect the activities being proposed.

1.5 Programme categories

When applying for a Programme Grant, you need to select one of the following programme categories:

General Programme: Supporting excellent ideas and innovations proposed by researchers, designed to improve health outcomes for New Zealanders. This includes research that aligns with the Pacific or Health Delivery investment categories.

Rangahau Hauora Māori Programme: Supporting Māori health research that contributes to Māori health gains, upholds rangatiratanga and utilises and advances Māori knowledge, resources, and people.

The same application cannot be submitted to both categories. The HRC does not provide advice on which project category you should choose. You cannot change categories once your application has been created.

1.6 Eligibility

Please take note of the following eligibility criteria, which apply to the director and co-director (if applicable) on a Programme Grant application, defined as the first named investigator and co-first named investigator.

The first named investigator (director) is the individual with overall responsibility of the programme.

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 organisation.

The co-first named investigator (co-director) is an individual with joint overall responsibility for the programme.

The HRC welcomes proposals with programme co-directors under circumstances that would result in a research team of exceptional strength, such as interdisciplinary work. Adding a co-director provides a broader range of skills, expertise, and representation, and develops leaders.

To be eligible for a Programme Grant, the first-named investigator (director) and co-first named investigator (co-director):

- must have New Zealand as their principal domicile and their principal place of employment (refer to the HRC Rules for definitions)
- must be able to assign at least 20% FTE to the Programme
- can only submit one Programme application in the 2026 funding round
- must complete all progress or end of contract reports that are due from previous contracts in HRC 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).

Note: Host organisations are responsible for ensuring that New Zealand is the director's principal domicile and place of employment. By submitting an application, the host is satisfied that this condition has been met.

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Programme director requirements

In addition to the eligibility criteria above, the Programme director must also have a proven record of managing projects of a sizeable and complex nature.

The following individuals are eligible to be a Programme director:

1. A director of a current HRC-funded Programme contract which expires within a year (i.e. before 6 November 2025)[8].
2. A director of an HRC-funded Programme contract which expired in the past five years (i.e. after 6 November 2020).
3. A first named investigator on at least two HRC Project contracts that are current or expired in the last 24 months (i.e. after 6 November 2023).[9] Contracts awarded through a contestable process with a comparable national/international agency may be considered.[10]
4. A first named investigator on an HRC Project contract that is current or expired in the last 12 months (i.e. after 6 November 2024) proposing to lead a Programme team with at least two co-directors. The co-directors must be a first named investigator on at least two HRC Project contracts that are current or expired in the last 24 months (i.e. after 6 November 2023). Contracts awarded through a contestable process with a comparable national/international agency may be considered.
5. A director on a Programme application that was shortlisted for and assessed by the Programme Assessing Committee in the 2025 funding round.

These requirements can be met by combining a director and co-director's experience.

For example, to meet the eligibility criterion "A first named investigator on at least two HRC Project contracts that are current or expired in the last 24 months", the director and co-director could be the first named investigator on one Project contract each. In this instance, at least one of the Project contracts must be current at the time of the application deadline.

A programme director can only lead one Programme contract at a time, except for the overlap allowed in the first bullet point.

The HRC will review the programme director requirements periodically. If you have questions on eligibility, please contact your organisation's research office. If your organisation does not have a research office, please contact the HRC.

Programme team requirements

When applying for a Programme Grant, please ensure the following criteria are all met:

- There are at least three established researchers named on the application who will be responsible for the scientific direction and quality of the research.
- The named investigators have a successful funding history of peer-reviewed contracts.
- The named investigators have a successful history of knowledge translation.
- The named investigators have an outstanding track record of achievement in health research.
- Support will be provided to those seeking training in health research.
- Each named investigator devotes a substantial and specified portion of time to the research programme.
- Members of the research team can attend an interview in early March 2026 if your application is shortlisted for the Programme Assessing Committee.

[8] Specific dates have been given to clarify the requirements and are based on the application due date of 6 November 2025.
[9] Includes HRC Projects awarded in the annually run funding rounds. Grants valued at around $800,000 due to a lower overhead may be considered. Not included: Feasibility Study Grants, Emerging Researcher First Grants, HRC Fellowships and awards less than $500,000.
[10] Any health research project of similar value and term to an HRC Project (i.e. $1,200,000 for 3 years) from an agency that allocates funds using internationally accepted contestable processes and peer review. Examples: Marsden fund, MBIE Endeavour fund, National Health and Medical Research Council (Australia), National Institutes of Health (US), and Medical Research Council (UK).

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If you do not meet any of the above criteria, you will need written approval from the HRC before submitting your application.

1.7 Negotiation of contract details

After the Council approves a Programme Grant, the HRC will negotiate with the programme director and the host organisation to confirm:

- the research objectives to be supported
- the final programme budget
- FTE commitments to the contract
- any funding to be provided by other agencies in support of the Programme research objectives
- any necessary ethics and/or regulatory approvals.

1.8 Key dates

Event	Description	**Date** (1 pm)
Applications open	Applicants start their Programme application via HRC Gateway	28 August 2025
Creation deadline	You must create your application on HRC Gateway by this date	31 October 2025
Applications close	You must complete your application on HRC Gateway by this date	6 November 2025
Assessment	Applications reviewed by discipline-specific assessing committees	February 2026
	Shortlisted applicants interviewed by the Programme Assessing Committee	March 2026
Decision	Council decision	April 2026

Creation deadline (NEW)

Please create your Programme application on HRC Gateway by **1pm on 31 October 2025.** 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 a Programme application after this deadline has passed.

Submission deadline

Please submit your application to HRC Gateway by **1pm on 6 November 2025**. Applications will not be accepted **after 1pm** on the closing date unless you have **written** authorisation from the HRC.

Important: 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.

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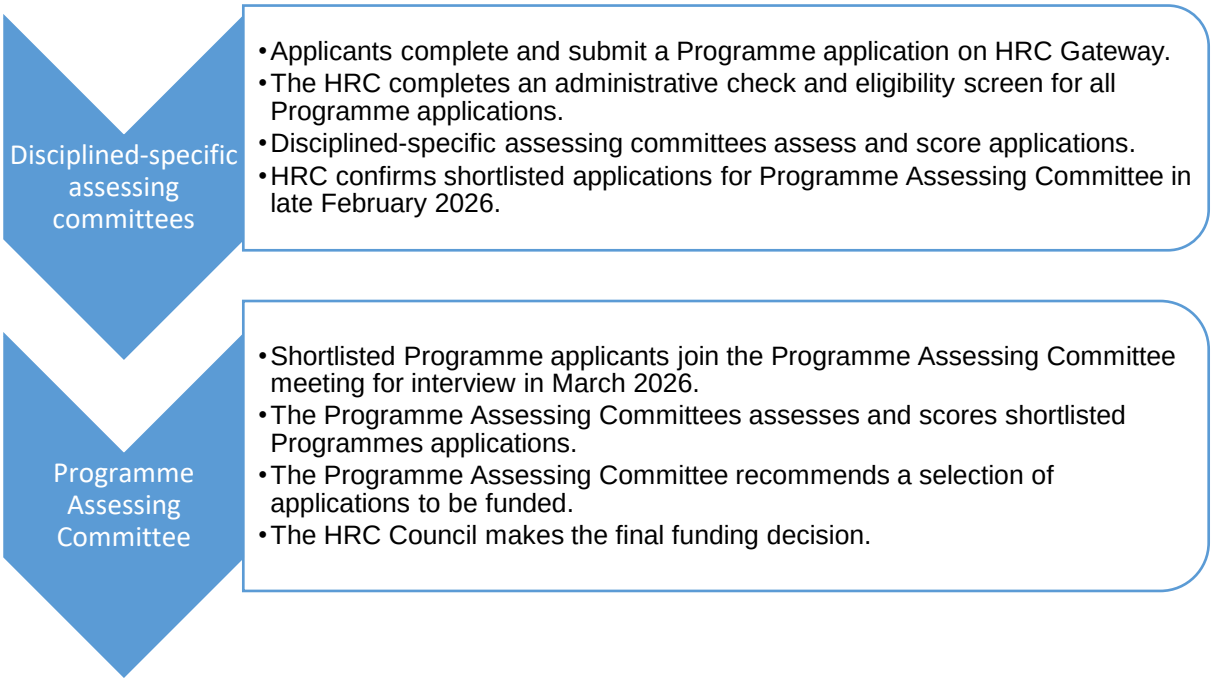
1.9 Application process overview

Refer to Appendix 1-4 of this document for further information on the assessment process and scoring criteria.



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Part 2: General rules for 2026 Programme Grant applications

2.1 Preparation

HRC Gateway account

You will need an HRC Gateway account to apply for a Programme 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 Programme Application Guidelines (this document)
- Government Policy Statement on Health (2024-2027)
- New Zealand Health Research Strategy (2017-2027)
- New Zealand Health Research Prioritisation Framework
- HRC Research Ethics Guidelines
- Guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori
- HRC Māori Health Advancement Guidelines and supporting resources
- Guidelines for Pacific Health Research
- HRC Research Impact Assessment slideshow
- ARRIVE guidelines for animal research (if applicable)
- HRC Peer Review Manual (accessed via the 2026 Programmes information page on HRC Gateway)

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

Application forms

You will need to download and complete two different forms when submitting a Programme Grant application:

- 2026 Programme Grant Application Form (Microsoft Word template)
- 2026 Programme Grant Budget Form (Microsoft Excel template)

You can download these forms from the 2026 Programmes information page on HRC Gateway. Do not use any other templates; otherwise, your application will be withdrawn.

Complete the application form in Microsoft Word and the budget form in Microsoft Excel. Once completed, upload the application form as a PDF file to HRC Gateway. Upload the budget form as both an Excel spreadsheet (.xlsx) and a PDF file. When converting your budget form into a PDF format, make sure all Excel spreadsheet tabs are included.

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 Programme Grant requirements.

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If your organisation has not been previously funded as the 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 information and the relevant forms for your organisation to complete.

Consents necessary to carry out research (NEW)

All Programme 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 1.3** carefully, as applications involving out-of-scope research types will be withdrawn.

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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. 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's research office rather than to the HRC directly.
4. 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.
5. Do not include any additional material (e.g. slides, protocols) 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.
6. 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 the HRC assessing committees.

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 Programme director before responding to the request. Where appropriate, the request may be transferred to the host organisation.

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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.

2.4 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, an additional 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 entity, 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,[11] and may require funded projects to identify, mitigate, and monitor risks as part of the contractual conditions of the Programme.

[11] 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.

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Part 3. Instructions on completing and submitting a 2026 Programme Grant application

This section contains instructions for completing and submitting your application. It includes prompts for providing certain information that will be used to score your application.

A 2026 Programme Grant application consists of six modules. Refer to **Sections 3.2-3.7** for detailed guidance on how to complete each module.

Module 1 'General information' must be completed on HRC Gateway. You need to click on the 'Create application' button to start your application. Update the required areas as indicated on HRC Gateway.

Complete Module 2 'Research', Module 3 'References', and Module 4A-C 'Contract information and budget' in the **2026 Programme Application Form** (Microsoft Word template).
Please upload all letters of collaboration/support and memorandums of understanding to HRC Gateway. HRC Gateway will automatically generate a list of uploaded documents under Module 4D.

Complete Modules 4E-G 'Research proposal budget, 'Subcontract budget', 'FTE summary', and 'List of collaborators' in the **2026 Programme Budget Form** (Microsoft Excel template). Refer to **Section 3.5** for 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 sheets 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. Refer to **Section 3.6** for detailed requirements.

Module 6 'Research classification' must 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 all requirements have been met.

3.1 The Programme 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 created directly in the form.

Please:

- Use the original HRC document templates as they contain special features.
- 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: Application details, investigators, objectives and milestones

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

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Step 1

Start the application process by clicking the ‘Create application’ button on the 2026 Programme Grant 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.

Application type/stream

Select the programme category for the application (General or Rangahau Hauora Māori). Please refer to Section 1.5 for details.

The HRC cannot re-assign applications that are entered into the wrong category. If you wish to change categories while applying, please register for and submit a new application in the correct category.

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 called ‘Host organisation details’ will appear in the next section, and the name of your 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 handle 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 value for money (being specific about the anticipated outcomes where possible).

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. The HRC reserves the right to amend the lay summary of any HRC-funded research in terms of its readability for a lay audience.

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Research location

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 proposal 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 August 2026**.

Support personnel

Examples of support personnel include individuals who will help you with the Programme 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 (director)

The first named investigator for the application is the director of the Programme. Their details will be automatically populated as the individual logged into HRC Gateway who is creating the application. This cannot be changed. Therefore, the application must be created by the director of the Programme.

Some of this information will be automatically populated from the first named investigator's profile on 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 the 'Update' button to enter and update the information requested.

The first named investigator will be 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 organisation.

In the case of co-directors, 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.

The first named investigator's CV must be uploaded into this section using the 'Upload CV' button.

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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 the application on HRC Gateway and will be included in Module 1**. Each named investigator will need to sign in to HRC Gateway and update their details before Programme applications are submitted. Click the 'Update' button to enter additional information as requested.

Click the 'Add investigator' button to add an individual to the application. You can search for an individual using their email or first and last name.

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

- Co-first named investigator: the co-director with joint overall responsibility for the Programme.
- Named investigator: a named investigator listed on the application, whose expertise and involvement are critical to the Programme's success.
- Student: a master's or PhD student named in the Programme 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).
- Upload all named investigators' CVs in this section using the 'Upload CV' button.

Certain information (i.e. ethnicity, gender, and whether the researcher is a clinician) is used for HRC information purposes only and 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.

Role in Programme should include brief information on what the named investigator will undertake in the Programme (1-2 sentences maximum). If the Programme has a co-director, state their role in this section.

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.

Collaborators (NEW)

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.

Research costs

Click the 'Update' button to enter the totals for staff costs, overhead, working expenses, and 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 their name, organisation, and the reason for exclusion.

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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.

Objectives

Briefly describe the intended objectives of this research application. 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.

Milestones

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.

Example milestones:

Year	Milestone	Objective(s)
1	Gain animal ethics approval	Objective 1
1	Complete animal study, data collection, and analysis	Objective 1
1	Register clinical trial prospectively in ANZCTR	Objective 2
1	Gain ethics approval for clinical trial	Objective 2
2	Publish results of lab-based study	Objective 1
2	Recruit 200 participants to clinical trial	Objective 2
3	Complete recruitment to clinical trial (300 total)	Objective 2
3	Complete statistical analysis of clinical trial	Objective 2
4	Submit manuscript to NZMJ	All objectives

3.3 Module 2: Research

Note: Programmes submitted to the Rangahau Hauora Māori category should address all six investment signal goals in Module 2. Please refer to Appendix 3 for further guidance.

Section 2A: 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 **one page** long. Use the suggested headings and add subheadings if required.

Section 2B: List of proposed research objectives or projects

Use the table in the form to list the proposed research objectives/projects within the Programme and the named investigator leading each objective/project.

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Section 2C: Description of proposed research (16-page limit)

The page limit for this section is **16 pages.** The section headings provided must be used.

The assessing committee membership is broadly discipline-based, matched to the range of applications assigned to that committee. Therefore, not all members will have specialist knowledge of every research topic. Try to write the application for members with a general understanding of the research area/field.

Ensure you address all of the score criteria in this section. Refer to Appendices 2-4 for further details.

Using graphics and tables is an efficient use of space. Ensure that the format of non-text content is compatible with PDF conversion software.

Research objectives or projects (NEW)

All HRC-funded research must focus on health and improving health outcomes and/or the health system and be within the scope outlined in Section 1.3. You will need to clearly describe the health and health system issues that your research aims to address.

Demonstrate that you have adequately reviewed what is already known in the area and that there is a clear case for further research. If similar research has already been conducted overseas, clearly explain the additional value of conducting this research in New Zealand.

Describe how the research programme has been designed to deliver maximum value for public investment in health research. For example:

- What is the significance of the health issue for New Zealand?
- Does the proposed research programme provide a clear evidence-base when describing areas of high health need and population groups with high health need?
- What is the significant/important gap in knowledge, policy, practice, or service delivery need that your research will address?
- How does your proposed research build on existing knowledge and evidence, and how will it contribute to, extend, or align with research currently being undertaken either nationally or internationally?

Ensure your research objectives or projects form a cohesive theme of research. Programme outcomes should be greater than the sum of three individual Project outcomes.

For each objective, describe the rationale, design and methods, impact, Māori health advancement and research team track record, as these are the scoring criteria assessed by the assessing committee.

If your application includes randomised controlled trials, refer to Appendix 5 for additional guidance.

The long-term goals of the research group

Outline your long-term research goals and describe how this Programme will help the group achieve its goals.

Collective benefits (NEW)

Describe the collective benefits of the Programme and overall progress towards impact on improving health outcomes and/or the health system, including clearly articulated potential benefits for areas of high health need and population groups with high health need.

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.

The group's track record

Describe the group's track record of, and policies and practices for, the dissemination and uptake of research results. Include plans for stakeholder engagement and maximising the potential use of research findings.

The collaborative nature of the research

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Describe collaborations with others critical to the success of your research programme, including connections with the next-users and end-users of the research, such as health service providers and health policy advisors (where appropriate).

Staffing, management and organisation of the research programme

Describe the research programme's staffing, management and organisation. Include details of leadership and communication, administrative mechanisms, resource and financial management. Describe the group's productivity and synergy of skills. Declare any relevant career disruptions.

Workforce development
Describe how your research programme will contribute to building the critical health research capability New Zealand needs to address priority health outcomes now and for the future.

Outline the training opportunities to develop early career researchers and next programme leaders and/or health professionals that exist or will be developed within the programme. Describe the consideration of gender balance throughout the research team.

Host organisation support

Describe the level of support and facilities that will be provided by the host organisation.

Māori health advancement

Describe how the outcomes of your research will contribute to Māori health advancement. Outline the specific activities that have been, and will be, undertaken (that are relevant to this Programme) to realise the contribution to advancing Māori health through the life of the Programme and also beyond it.

Potential benefits for other population groups experiencing inequitable health outcomes in New Zealand (e.g. Pacific peoples) should not be conflated with contributions to Māori health advancement and will not be considered when assessing and scoring the Māori health advancement criterion.

Refer to Appendix 6 for further details on the Māori health advancement score criterion.[12]

3.4 Module 3: References

This section should start on a new page. There is no page limit for this section.

Include a **full list of all authors**, the title, journal, year, volume and page numbers. Place an asterisk beside applicants' publications.

A reference to Māori terms in the application with a brief translation can be included in this section.

3.5 Module 4: Contract information and budget

Complete Sections 4A–4C in the Programme Application form (Microsoft Word template).

Section 4D is automatically generated by HRC Gateway.

Complete Sections 4E–4H in the Programme Budget form (Microsoft Excel template).

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

[12] For Rangahau Hauora Māori Programme applications: The Māori health advancement score criterion is only assessed if the application is shortlisted for the Programme Assessing Committee.

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assistants, technicians, medical staff, interviewers, and support staff, 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.
- A justification for unnamed postdoctoral fellows. 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.
- Roles 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'. 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 committees 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 committees 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

Contracts awarded within the past five years

Using the table provided, outline current and previous funding contracts from any agency that have been received in the last five years by:

- the director and co-director (if applicable)
- any named investigator, if they were the first named investigator on an awarded grant and their FTE contribution for the current Programme application is at least 10%.

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.

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Section 4C: Other support

Project applications related to this Programme

State if any named investigators on this Programme application are also named investigators on an HRC Project application. If the Project is a part of this Programme application and your Programme application is successfully funded, the project application will be withdrawn.

Other research applications awaiting decisions

List any research applications involving the director, co-director and all senior named investigators that are pending with the HRC and other agencies. If applicable, indicate 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 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 project costs, equipment, staff joint appointments). Clearly describe how the current application relates to those relationships.

If you can identify any financial or other interests in a funding application, please 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/memorandums of understanding (MOU) and letters of collaboration/support) should be uploaded as separate PDF files under the 'Letters of collaboration/support documents' on HRC Gateway.

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.

Section 4E: Research proposal budget

The budget spreadsheet in Section 4E can be used for different types of applications. Select 'Programme' from the drop-down list. Further instructions are 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

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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 of $5,000,000 (for a five-year programme).

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 for each year.

The budget form does not accept FTEs 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 Programme. 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.

Note: Overheads will be paid at a negotiated rate for each institution on all eligible contracts.

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 – 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 of research participants.
- Costs associated with knowledge transfer activities.
- Travel costs **directly** related to the conduct of the research. Contract funds may be used to assist with overseas travel, provided the HRC is satisfied that such travel is directly relevant to the conduct of the research and that alternative sources of funding 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. Fares and allowances should be calculated following the host organisation's regulations and scales.

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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 budget for the application. 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 both stipends and fees 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 p.a.; PhD $30,000 p.a.). Fees should be justified as reasonable estimates for the course of study and institution where they would be enrolled.

Both named and unnamed students can be included; in both cases, a description of the student's research project/contribution to the research activity should be provided 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 organisation arranging a tax-free stipend that satisfies the Inland Revenue Department and host organisation's rules.

Subcontract Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Budget

Subcontract 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).

A *pro forma* MOU is available upon request from the HRC. If a subcontract/MOU budget is more than $50,000, all expenses requested should be broken down into the appropriate categories in Section 4F (MOU budget).

Please provide MOUs for all 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 Programme 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 and the percentage rates for both ACC and superannuation 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 10%.

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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: 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 subcontract/MOU as a supporting document in HRC Gateway.

A CV must also be provided in Module 5 for all named investigators on MOUs to help the assessing committees determine whether the investigator’s expertise is appropriate and necessary. Without this information, the assessing committees may not support the budget for the MOU. CVs are not required for employees of commercial enterprises providing services for a fee.

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:

- 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 programme).
- Identify all postgraduate students by 'master’s' 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 (NEW)

Note: The NZ Standard CV template has been updated, and the new version is available to download on HRC Gateway.

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.

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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 potential economic benefits which may arise from your research. If you do not anticipate any direct economic benefits, please state this rather than leaving the field blank. 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.

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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.

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Appendix 1: Programme application assessment process

3. Overview (NEW)

Programme applications are assessed through a one-stage process. Peer review is provided by assessing committees convened by the HRC to provide expert assessment of the quality and scientific rigour of each application. Assessing committee members are experts in relevant areas of research: some committees are multidisciplinary committees; others focus on a particular research field.

Each application is discussed at a discipline-specific assessing committee meeting and allocated an overall score and ranking (see Appendix 2). The highly ranked applications are shortlisted to the Programme Assessing Committee (PAC) who interview applicants and score applications (see Appendix 3).

The HRC will also screen applications for alignment with HRC priorities (see Section 1.3).

In the final stages of the process, the Programme Assessing Committee provide a list of recommendations for fundable applications to the Council who make the final funding decisions, taking into consideration priorities in relation to health research and the balance of HRC investment.

In previous years, applications have been assessed by both assessing committee members and external peer reviewers. **Please note** that the assessment process for the 2026 round does not include external peer review and rebuttal. Peer review will only be provided by assessing committee members.

4. Assessing Programme applications

Assessing committee membership

Assessing committee membership depends on the scope of the applications received. The HRC seeks to match an assessing committee's expertise to the research fields of the applications they are considering. The number of members on an assessing committee and their expertise will depend on the scope of the applications, taking into account conflicts of interest (see Section 4 of this appendix).

Assessing committee meeting procedure

Programme applications are reviewed by members of the relevant assessing committee ahead of discussion of each application at the assessing committee meeting. It is expected that most or all applications will be discussed at the meeting.

However, if it is necessary to limit the number at this stage to ensure the meeting has sufficient time to discuss the most competitive applications, pre-scoring may be applied to identify the lowest quality applications before the assessing committee.

In this case, the assessing committee members will independently allocate pre-scores on the same 1-7 scale used at the upcoming meeting to all applications assigned to the meeting (see Appendix 2). The average pre-scores will be collated to identify a preliminary ranking, and some of the lower-ranked applications may not be discussed at the meeting. Where there is a marked scoring discrepancy for an application, it may also be taken through to the meeting for full discussion.

Programme applications will be discussed by the assessing committee. Each application will have an assigned committee reviewer whose role is to summarise how the application aligns with each score criterion. They will also use the committee's discussion to inform the application's review summary (written feedback to the applicants).

The assessing committee chairs are responsible for ensuring the committee's discussion is fair and balanced. General discussion by all assessing committee members is essential for a balanced committee opinion, not unduly influenced by one committee member and should not be cut short nor unduly extended.

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Up to 45 minutes of discussion time will be allocated to each Programme application.

Assessing committee meeting scoring criteria: General Programmes

Applications are scored on a 7-point word ladder using the following five equally weighted criteria. These are listed below with a full description in Appendix 2. Scores must be whole numbers.

The 'Cohesiveness of the research programme' criterion score is not included in the application's total score.

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

Criteria	Points	% score
Rationale for research	7	20
Design and methods	7	20
Research impact	7	20
Māori health advancement	7	20
Expertise and track record of the research team	7	20
Cohesiveness of research programme (not included in total score)	7	0
Total	**35**	**100**

The committee also considers and may make recommendations on:

- the appropriateness of the timeline for the proposed research
- the milestones and objectives
- the appropriateness of the researchers' requested FTE and any direct costs requested
- the total cost of the research with respect to 'value for money'.

The scores are submitted via HRC Gateway and collated confidentially by the HRC staff.

The assessing committees for the General Programme Grants do not decide which programmes proceed to the next stage (the Programme Assessing Committee). Shortlisting for the Programme Assessing Committee is based on normalised rank scores.

Scoring criteria – Rangahau Hauora Māori Programmes

Applications are scored on a 7-point word ladder using the following four equally weighted criteria. These are listed below with a full description in Appendix 3. Scores must be whole numbers.

The 'Cohesiveness of the research programme' criterion score is not included in the application's total score.

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

Criteria	Points	% score
Rationale for research	7	25
Design and methods	7	25
Research impact	7	25
Expertise and track record of the research team	7	25
Cohesiveness of research programme (not included in total score)	7	0
Total	**28**	**100**

The committee also takes into consideration and may make recommendations on:

- the appropriateness of the timeline for the proposed research
- the milestones and objectives
- the appropriateness of the researchers' requested FTE and any direct costs requested

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- the total cost of the research with respect to ‘value for money’.

The scores are submitted via HRC Gateway and collated confidentially by the HRC staff.

The assessing committee for Rangahau Hauora Māori (RHM) Programme Grants recommends which programmes should proceed to the next stage (the Programme Assessing Committee).

5. The Programme Assessing Committee (PAC)

3.1 PAC shortlist

Only shortlisted applications are discussed at the PAC meeting. Applications are shortlisted based on the ranked list of assessing committee scores (normalised across all committees for General Programme Grants) and the recommendations from the Rangahau Hauora Māori Assessing Committee. Applications that are not shortlisted will not be considered further.

If an HRC Project grant application that is part of a Programme grant application is deemed not fundable in the separate Project Grant application process, the Programme application may still be shortlisted in this process.

3.2 PAC meeting procedure

Before the meeting

To inform their assessment, the PAC are provided with the application form, budget, and the assessing committee’s review summary.

Applicant interview

The programme director (or co-directors) and the senior named investigators on the shortlisted programme applications will be invited to attend an interview with the PAC.

During the interview, applicants:

- provide a brief overview of the programme
- address or clarify issues raised by the assessing committee or reviewers
- answer questions proposed by the PAC
- provide any further clarification.

The interview can help determine the relationship between the senior named investigators and their arrangements for their collaboration; the role of each investigator; how they interact or manage the component projects; and the potential for workforce development and succession planning.

If you are invited to the PAC interview, please note that:

- PAC is multidisciplinary with New Zealand and Australian/international members who have experience in managing research involving teams of investigators.
- The assessing committee assessed your application according to the scoring criteria noted in these guidelines; the PAC may follow up on some questions/issues raised by the assessing committee and will score overall ‘Quality of health research’.
- You may have a question-and-answer session with the PAC. The PAC may seek further information related to their score criteria and other elements of the application. The HRC guides acceptable interactions between applicants and the PAC, including protocols for culturally appropriate welcomes and any limitations to the scope of potential discussions.

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3.3 PAC scoring criteria

In the PAC meeting, applications are scored on a 7-point word ladder using equally weighted criteria. These are listed below with a full description in Appendix 4.

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

Criteria	Points	% score
Overall quality of health research	7	20
Potential for outcomes	7	20
Vision of programme	7	20
Māori health advancement	7	20
Research team collaboration and integration	7	20
Total	**35**	**100**

The PAC also considers:

- the assessing committee's overall assessment of the application
- the appropriateness of the timeline for the proposed research
- the total cost of the research with respect to 'value for money'.

The scores are submitted via HRC Gateway and collated confidentially by the HRC staff.

3.4 Recommendation of fundable applications

After scoring, HRC staff generate a ranked list of applications according to the total score. The PAC, noting conflicts of interest then identify the applications assessed as fundable.

3.5 Funding decisions - Council

The PAC's recommendations of fundable applications are presented to the Council who make the final funding decisions, 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.

3.6 Feedback to applicants

At the conclusion of the funding round, applicants can access their application outcome via HRC Gateway. For applications that were discussed at an assessing committee meeting, the committee reviewer writes a brief review summary of the committee discussion (Appendix 7). Applications that were shortlisted to the Programme Assessing Committee will receive an additional review summary.

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.

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

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4. Conflict of interest

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 Conflict of Interest Management Policy.

5. Score normalisation

Statistical normalisation will be applied to minimise the effect of scoring variation between committees. Statistical normalisation calculates the z-score of a number using the mean and standard deviation of a distribution (assessing committee total scores) corrected for the mean and standard deviation of the larger distribution (all assessing committee total scores). Projects and Programmes are included in the normalisation process.

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Appendix 2: Assessing committee scoring criteria for General Programme Grant applications

The 7-point word ladder containing criteria descriptors is considered against each of the following criterion outlined below (listed A-F).

Notes:

- The 'Adequate' anchor point is 3 points.
- Applicants do not necessarily have to address all of the points outlined 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

Criteria	Points	% score
Rationale for research	7	20
Research design and methods	7	20
Research impact	7	20
Māori health advancement	7	20
Expertise and track record of the research team	7	20
Cohesiveness of research programme (not in total)	7	0
Total	**35**	**100**

A. Rationale for research (NEW)

The research is important, worthwhile, and justifiable to New Zealand, with consideration of the international context, because it addresses some or all the following:

- it addresses a significant health issue for New Zealand
- it provides a clear evidence-base when describing areas of high health need and population groups with high health need
- the aims, research questions and hypotheses build on and advance existing knowledge, address an important knowledge gap in knowledge, policy, practice, or service delivery need
- it demonstrates clear potential to improve health outcomes and/or the health system
- the research is original and innovative with potential to advance international science, achieve unique competitive advantage and/or contribute to economic gain.

B. Research design and methods

The study has been well-designed to answer the research questions because it demonstrates some or all of the following:

- comprehensive and feasible study design that is achievable within the timeframe
- appropriate study design to address the objectives of the research
- awareness of statistical considerations/technical or population issues/practicalities
- evidence of availability of materials/samples
- culturally appropriate methodology
- sound data management and data monitoring arrangements
- well-managed patient safety issues.

C. Research impact

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

- Applicants have described a credible pathway for how their research will:
  - result in benefits or opportunities for future research in NZ, or
  - influence policy, practice, or health services or technologies in NZ, leading to improved health or economic impacts

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- The research team is undertaking steps to maximise the likelihood of impact beyond the production of knowledge (as appropriate to the context of the research) and has the necessary skills, networks and experience to achieve this.

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 is undertaking activities to address Māori health advancement, as appropriate to the nature and scope of the research. This may include, but is not limited to, activities such as:
    - establishing meaningful, collaborative, and reciprocal relationships with Māori
    - undertaking research that addresses Māori health needs 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 track record of the research team

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

- appropriate qualifications and experience
- the right mix of expertise, experience and FTEs, including consideration of capacity building
- capability to perform research in the current research environment
- networks/collaborations
- a history of productivity and delivery on previous research funding.

F. Cohesiveness of research programme

Programme support is justified because:

- integration/combination of objectives will yield better outcomes as a programme than as individual projects
- there is planning and management for the term of the programme
- the collaboration of senior named investigators is well-established and well-managed.

Note: The ‘Cohesiveness of research programme’ score criterion is not part of the total score used for ranking applications but provides an opinion to the Programme Assessing Committee.

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Appendix 3: Assessing committee scoring criteria for Rangahau Hauora Māori Programme applications

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

Notes:

- The 'Adequate' anchor point is 3 points.
- Applicants do not necessarily have to address all of the points outlined 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

Criteria	Points	% score
Rationale for research	7	25
Research design and methods	7	25
Research impact	7	25
Expertise and track record of the research team	7	25
Cohesiveness of research programme (not in total)	7	0
Total	**28**	**100**

A. Rationale for research (NEW)

The research is important, worthwhile, and justifiable to New Zealand, with consideration to the international context, because it addresses some or all of the following:

- it addresses a significant health issue that is important for Māori
- it demonstrates clear potential to improve health outcomes and/or the health system
- it provides a clear evidence-base when describing areas of high health need and population groups with high health need
- the aims, research questions and hypotheses build on existing knowledge and address a significant/important gap in knowledge, policy, practice, or service delivery need, and contribute to the creation of Māori health knowledge (Goal 1)
- the research is original and innovative.

B. Research design and methods

The study has been well-designed to answer the research questions because it demonstrates:

- a comprehensive and feasible study design that is achievable within the timeframe
- an appropriate study design to address the objectives of the research
- awareness of statistical considerations, technical or population issues/practicalities
- evidence of availability of materials/samples
- Māori health research processes (Goal 3)
- Māori ethics processes (Goal 4)
- partnership with, and responsiveness to the needs of, Māori stakeholders and communities (Goal 6)
- a plan for disseminating results
- sound data management and data monitoring arrangements
- well-managed patient safety issues.

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C. Research impact

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

- Applicants have described a credible pathway for how their research will:
  - result in benefits or opportunities for future research in NZ, or
  - influence policy, practice, or health services or technologies in NZ, leading to improved health or economic impacts.
- The research team is undertaking steps to maximise the likelihood of impact by:
  - contributing to the creation of Māori health knowledge (Goal 1)
  - contributing to the translation of findings into Māori health gains (Goal 2)
  - incorporating Māori health research processes (Goal 3)
  - incorporating Māori ethics processes (Goal 4)
  - contributing to building a highly skilled Māori health research workforce (Goal 5)
  - responding to the needs of, and working in partnership with, Māori stakeholders and communities (Goal 6).

D. Expertise and track record of the research team

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

- the appropriate qualifications and experience
- the right mix of expertise, experience and FTEs, including consideration of capacity building
- the capability to perform research in the current research environment
- networks/collaborations
- a history of productivity and delivery on previous research funding.

E. Cohesiveness of research programme

Programme support is justified because:

- integration/combination of objectives will yield better outcomes as a programme than individual projects
- there is planning and management for the term of the programme
- the collaboration of senior named investigators is well-established and well-managed.

Note: The ‘Cohesiveness of research programme’ score criterion is not part of the total score used for ranking applications but provides an opinion to the Programme Assessing Committee.

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Appendix 4: Programme Assessing Committee scoring criteria for General and Rangahau Hauora Māori Programme applications

A 7-point word ladder with criteria descriptors is used to assess the scoring categories outlined below (listed A-E). In your application, you do not have to address all of the points outlined 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

Criteria	Points	% score
Overall quality of health research	7	20
Potential for outcomes	7	20
Vision of programme	7	20
Māori health advancement	7	20
Research team collaboration and integration	7	20
Total	**35**	**100**

The Programme Assessing Committee (PAC) also considers factors that may influence scoring, which include:

- the assessing committee's assessment of the application
- the appropriateness of the timeline for the proposed research
- the total cost of the research with respect to 'value for money'.

A. Overall quality of health research

The proposed research demonstrates quality through:

- robust study design
- an appropriate approach to deliver valid results
- suitable infrastructure and support.

B. Potential for outcomes (NEW)

The proposed research has the potential for realising:

- health knowledge (including a clear focus on areas of high health need and population groups with high health need)
- research-related benefits, including training opportunities (to develop early career researchers and next programme leaders, provide research engagement opportunities for health professionals, and strengthen health research workforce capacity for Māori investigators)
- influence on policy, practice, or service delivery
- contribution to improvement in health outcomes or health services, and/or contribution to harnessing the benefits of research and innovation for economic gain (revenue generating or cost saving).

C. Vision of programme

The application indicates:

- innovation, originality and visionary scientific thinking
- planning by the programme director that indicates superior research activity
- the research is at the forefront of health research (nationally and internationally)
- a clear direction for the research programme with potential for impact and contribution to wider health and science system goals.

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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 is undertaking activities to address Māori health advancement, as appropriate to the nature and scope of the research. This may 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, and
    - adhering to culturally appropriate research practices and principles (as appropriate to the context of the research).

E. Research team collaboration and integration

The research team:

- has the qualifications to undertake the research
- has experience and knowledge in the proposed research area
- has a track record of disseminating research results
- has a record of collaboration
- has sufficient FTE allocated to this research
- are integrated with a synergy of research skills and experience
- has overall management planning.

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Appendix 5: Applications including randomised controlled trials (RCTs)

The Controlled Trials Assessing Committee (CTAC) is responsible for assessing randomised controlled trials (RCTs) submitted to the General category to ensure consistency in assessing RCTs and to improve the quality of HRC-funded RCTs. CTAC members are selected for their knowledge and experience of RCTs and have expertise in disciplines reflecting the nature of applications assigned to the committee. Member(s) of the Data Monitoring Core Committee may also be represented on CTAC.

Generic weaknesses that have been highlighted by CTAC include issues with methodological quality and poor knowledge of clinical trial conduct. To improve the rigour and completeness of clinical trial proposals, please refer to the SPIRIT 2013 Statement (Standard Protocol Items: Recommendations for Interventional Trials)[13] when developing your trial protocols and applications.

In addition, consider all 33 items on the SPIRIT checklist. Pay particular attention to the items listed in the Methods section (items 9–23). Addressing these can improve methodological quality and enhance knowledge of clinical trial conduct. Furthermore, consider designing phase III trials with 90% power to detect well-justified minimum important differences. Exceptions would include research questions of importance to New Zealanders that can only be addressed in New Zealand, and if the trial size is limited by the pool of patients and pressure for a timely answer.

Consider the broad expertise of your audience (CTAC) when describing your trial protocol. For example, when describing sample size (SPIRIT item 14), justify all information in the calculation and clearly describe the minimum important difference and how this translates into meaningful clinical benefit.

Many clinical trial research applications request funding for the New Zealand arm of an international study. Clear administrative information relating to funding (SPIRIT item 4) is required, including the status of all sources of funding and whether the proposal is dependent on international funding. Roles and responsibilities (SPIRIT item 5) should be stated explicitly, including the specific role of the New Zealand investigator (as distinct from the site co-ordinator role) and any New Zealand-led trial components. Additionally, address the New Zealand-specific health significance and impact on clinical care in New Zealand rather than replicating generic information from the international protocol.

Clinical trial registration

As part of our commitment to supporting best practice in clinical trials, the HRC is a signatory to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Joint Statement on Public Disclosure of Results from Clinical Trials. This sets out policy and monitoring requirements for mandatory timeframes for prospective clinical trial registration and public disclosure of clinical trial results. The Joint Statement reflects the ethical and quality standards that must be met by HRC-funded clinical trials. This will enhance health research in New Zealand and internationally while providing easily accessible information for the public, patients and their whānau.

The HRC's full policy statement on clinical trial transparency can be found here.

All RCTs funded by the HRC, either wholly or partly, must be registered on an established clinical trials registry (e.g. ANZCTR; Clinicaltrials.gov). Registrations should be prospective and added to the application as a Year 1 milestone, even if you expect registration to be achieved before starting a resulting contract.

[13] *Chan A-W, Tetzlaff JM, Altman DG, et al. SPIRIT 2013 statement: Defining standard protocol items for clinical trials. *Ann Intern Med* 2013; 158: 200-07. This guidance builds on ICH GCP E6 guidance regarding protocol items. The CONSORT Statement (2010) for clinical trial reporting should also be considered at the protocol design stage.

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Appendix 6: Māori health advancement criterion

The HRC expects applicants for HRC research funding to consider all potential ways in which their application will advance Māori health, and to 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 may 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 programme and also beyond it.

All applicants for HRC funding are required to address these two components in their applications. Applicants should consider how their research is informed by the four domains of Māori health advancement (see the Māori Health Advancement Guidelines for more details). Researchers are encouraged to consider the domains when developing 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.

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

Give a realistic description of how your research could contribute to improved Māori health outcomes or reductions in inequity over time. Consider potential short-term and/or longer-term Māori health gains, within the specific context of your research and where it is positioned along the research pathway. In addition, identify more immediate users and beneficiaries of the research who can utilise the research findings for Māori health gain.

2. **What activities have you already undertaken (that are relevant to this Programme), and what will you undertake during this Programme, that will realise your research contribution to Māori health advancement?**

Identify elements of the team's track record that give confidence that this research will optimally contribute to Māori health advancement. For example: existing links, relationships, or networks with relevant Māori communities and next-users or end-users of research; examples of knowledge translation and uptake; or changes to practice or policy that have enhanced equity and advanced Māori health.

Describe specific actions that have been, and will be, undertaken (from the development of the research idea through to the completion of the Programme) 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.

If your research is not expected to make direct contributions to Māori health, identify actions that will be undertaken throughout the life of the Programme to contribute to other facets of Māori health advancement. Identify barriers to actioning your aspirations for advancing Māori health and your mitigation strategies (where relevant).

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Appendix 7: Assessing committee review summary

HRC reference #		**Applicant surname**	
Research title			
Host organisation			

Note to committee reviewer: 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)

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