

Endeavour Fund 2023 Investment Round

Notice to the Science Board

1. In this notice, I:
 - a. specify that the Science Board is to make funding decisions on proposals for the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Endeavour Fund under section 10(3)(b) of the Research, Science, and Technology Act 2010 (“RS&T Act 2010”);
 - b. set the criteria for the eligibility and assessment of proposals for the Endeavour Fund under section 8(1) of the RS&T Act 2010;
 - c. specify the total value of funding available for the Science Board to award to proposals in the 2023 Investment Round; and
 - d. specify the funding mechanisms to be used, and the value and duration of investments under those funding mechanisms.

General Policy Objectives

2. The general policy objectives of the Endeavour Fund are to:
 - a. support research, science or technology, or related activities that have high potential to positively transform New Zealand’s economic, environmental, and societal outcomes, and give effect to the Vision Mātauranga policy; and
 - b. drive an increasing focus on:
 - i. excellent research; and
 - ii. the potential for impact in areas of future value, growth or critical need for New Zealand.

Interpretation

3. For the purposes of this notice and the Schedules to this notice, the terms:
 - a. **Vision Mātauranga policy** means the government policy which aims to enable the distinctive research, science and innovation potential of Māori people, knowledge and resources.
 - b. **research organisation** means an organisation that has sufficient internal capability for carrying out research, science or technology, or related activities.
 - c. **radical change** means “altering the fundamental nature of something”.
 - d. **2023 Investment Round** means the call for proposals made in 2022 and for which funding decisions are announced in 2023.
 - e. **Investment Plan** means the Endeavour Fund Investment Plan dated July 2021 published on MBIE’s website: <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/endeavour-fund-investment-plan-2022-2024.pdf>.

Funding Available

4. The Science Board may invest up to \$57 million of new, annual funding (excluding GST) through the 2023 Investment Round for the Endeavour Fund with an indicative split of \$39 million in the Research Programmes investment mechanism and \$18 million in the Smart Ideas investment mechanism.

5. The table below gives indicative new annual funding by mechanism available under the 2024 and 2025 Investment Rounds:

Investment Mechanism	2024	2025
Research Programmes	\$39 million	\$39 million
Smart Ideas	\$18 million	\$18 million

Funding Decisions

6. In making funding decisions on proposals for the Endeavour Fund, the Science Board will allocate funds as set out in the Investment Plan.
7. The Science Board must make funding decisions on proposals for the Endeavour Fund in accordance with:

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- a. the Public Finance Act 1989 and the relevant Appropriation Acts for Vote Business, Science and Innovation;
- b. the eligibility and assessment criteria specified in this notice and the relevant Schedules to this notice;
- c. the investment signals set out in the Investment Plan; and
- d. the Government's Vision Mātauranga policy.

Portfolio Approach

8. Where the Science Board takes a portfolio approach to funding decisions on proposals for the Endeavour Fund, this includes:

- a. ensuring each proposal funded has sufficient merit as assessed against the Excellence and Impact criteria in the relevant Schedules to this notice;
- b. considering how the overall mix of investments made, and the resulting total portfolio of new and existing contracts under the Endeavour Fund, meet the investment signals in the Investment Plan;
- c. considering the value offered by the largest Research Programme proposals;
- d. avoiding duplication, or excessive concentration, of research in any given area in the Endeavour Fund and the broader public science system; and
- e. meeting general policy objectives set out in clause 2 of this notice and specific policy objectives set out in clause 1 of each Schedule to this notice including the Vision Mātauranga policy.

Eligibility Criteria

9. For proposals to be eligible under the Endeavour Fund, they must:

- a. be made by a New Zealand-based Research Organisation or a New Zealand-based legal entity representing a New Zealand-based Research Organisation
- b. be designed so that the majority of benefits accrue outside of the Research Organisation or legal entity which represents the Research Organisation;
- c. not be made by a department of the public service as listed in Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act 2020;
- d. be made under an investment mechanism specified in the Schedules to this notice;
- e. be for research, science or technology, or related activities, the majority of which are to be undertaken in New Zealand, unless the Science Board considers that there are compelling reasons to consider the proposals, despite the amount of research, science or technology or related activities being proposed to be undertaken overseas;
- f. not benefit a Russian state institution (including but not limited to support for Russian military or security activity) or an organisation outside government that may be perceived as contributing to the war effort;
- g. meet any applicable timing, formatting, system or other similar administrative requirements imposed by MBIE in supplying administrative services to the Science Board under section 10(7) of the RS&T Act 2010;
- h. advise that the proposed funding recipient will, and the Science Board is of the view that it can, adhere to the terms and conditions of funding set out in an investment contract determined by the Science Board; and
- i. must not be for activities already funded elsewhere.

In addition to the above criteria, to be eligible:

- j. research proposals can include some out-of-scope research outcomes (health¹, defence and expanding knowledge) and remain eligible, as long as the sum of these outcomes is less than 50% of the proposal's outcomes.

10. Proposals determined to be ineligible by the Science Board under Paragraph 9 cannot be awarded funding.

Effective Date

11. The Investment Plan came into effect July 2021.
12. This notice will come into effect on 22 July 2022.
13. This notice will be revoked on 1 November 2024.

Dated at Wellington this 22nd day of July 2022.

HON DR AYESHA VERRALL, Minister of Research, Science and Innovation.

Schedule 1

Smart Ideas Investment Mechanism

Specific Policy Objectives

1. This investment mechanism is intended to catalyse and rapidly test promising, innovative research ideas with high potential for benefit to New Zealand, to enable and refresh diversity in the science portfolio.

Value and Duration of Funding

2. Investments made under the Smart Ideas mechanism will have a duration of either two or three years.

3. Investments made under the Smart Ideas mechanism will have a minimum value of \$0.4 million and a maximum value of \$1 million per contract.

4. The Science Board will aim to fund at least 49 Smart Ideas each investment round.

Assessment Criteria

5. In reaching funding decisions, the Science Board must initially assess proposals for Smart Ideas having regard to the extent to which each proposal meets the following criterion:

a. Excellence.

- i. Science (weighted 50%). Research should be well-designed, involve risk and/or novelty, and leverage additional value from wider research. Assessment must have particular regard to whether the proposed research, science or technology or related activities:
 - a. progress and disseminate new knowledge;
 - b. have a well-designed research plan and credible approach to risk management;
 - c. are ambitious in terms of scientific risk, technical risk, novelty and/or innovative approaches;
 - d. are well-positioned in the domestic and international research context; and
 - e. recognises the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge and resources, including Mātauranga Māori.
- ii. Team (weighted 15%). The proposed team should have the mix of complementary skills, knowledge and resources to deliver the proposed research, science or technology or related activities, and to manage risk.

Assessment must have particular regard as to whether:

- a. the mix of skills is appropriate for the research;
- b. the team has the skills, knowledge and resources which give confidence in their ability to deliver the research; and
- c. the team has the appropriate Māori expertise for the project.

6. Only proposals that have been assessed as having sufficient quality against the Excellence assessment criterion under clause 5(a) of this Schedule will be assessed with regard to the following additional criterion:

a. Impact.

- i. Benefit to New Zealand (weighted 25%). Research should have direct and indirect benefits or effect on individuals, communities or society as a whole, including broad benefits to New Zealand's economic, social, human or natural capital. Assessment must have particular regard to:
 - a. the scale and extent of potential benefits from the proposed research, science or technology or related activities;
 - b. the extent of alignment with one or more areas of future additional value, growth or critical need for New Zealand; and
 - c. the extent to which the project has identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
- ii. Implementation Pathway(s) (weighted 10%). Research should have a credible indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefit to New Zealand that is not limited to a single firm or end-user, and which may be uncertain in nature. Assessment must have particular regard to:
 - a. the credibility of end or next-user information, to confirm that the implementation pathway is appropriate for the state of the sector or the stage of the research;
 - b. the credibility of implementation pathway(s), to deliver public benefits to New Zealand, not limited to a single firm or end user;
 - c. the evidence of the strength of the relationships with end or next-users, and stakeholders; and

- d. whether there is sufficient input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) of the project, that are adequately resourced, to ensure effective implementation.

7. Once proposals have been assessed against both the Excellence and Impact assessment criteria in this schedule, the Science Board may also assess them for alignment with investment signals in the Investment Plan and may apply the portfolio approach described in clause 8 of the main notice.

Schedule 2

Research Programmes Investment Mechanism

Specific Policy Objectives

1. This investment mechanism is intended to support ambitious, excellent, and well-defined research ideas which collectively have credible and high potential to positively transform New Zealand's future in areas of future value, growth or critical need.

Value and Duration of Funding

2. Investments made under the Research Programmes mechanism will have a duration of either three, four or five years.

3. Investments made under the Research Programmes mechanism will have a minimum value of \$0.5 million per year.

4. The Science Board will consider whether the largest Research Programme proposals provide good value. As a result, the Science Board may choose to fund some smaller proposals instead, which it considers offer better value.

5. The Science Board will aim to fund at least 19 Research Programmes each investment round.

Impact Categories

6. A proposal for Research Programmes must be made under one of the impact categories "Transform" or "Protect and Add Value".

7. Proposals in the "Transform" category should meet the following criteria:

- a. Outcomes. Is the new, or changed, technology, process, practice, business model or policy, that is enabled by the research, a Radical Change and/or a leap in performance versus the status quo?;

AND

- b. Impact. Could the research ultimately lead to a transformational change within the New Zealand economy, society or environment by, for example, creating or disrupting economic activities, creating a new sustainable resource use or eliminating environmental damage, or changing the character of risks and opportunities faced by individuals and society?

8. Proposals that do not meet both criteria under clause 7 of this schedule should be made under the "Protect and Add Value" category.

9. For the avoidance of doubt, the focus of assessment for proposals in the "Transform" category is on the nature rather than the size of the impact. Evidence of a large impact will not be taken as conclusive evidence of a transformational impact.

10. When making funding decisions, the Science Board will aim to invest funding to proposals in each impact category in the ratio given in the Investment Plan, subject to the considerations set out in clause 8 of the main notice.

Assessment Criteria

11. In reaching funding decisions, the Science Board must initially assess Research Programmes proposals for the extent to which each proposal meets the following criterion:

- a. Excellence.

- i. Science (weighted 25%). Research should be well-designed, involve risk and/or novelty and leverage additional value from wider research. Assessment must have particular regard to whether the proposed research, science or technology or related activities:
 - a. progress and disseminate new knowledge;
 - b. have a well-designed research plan and credible approach to risk management;
 - c. are ambitious in terms of scientific risk, technical risk, novelty and/or innovative approaches;
 - d. are well-positioned in the domestic and international research context; and
 - e. recognises the distinctive research, science and innovation contributions of Māori people, knowledge and resources, including Mātauranga Māori.
- ii. Team (weighted 25%). The proposed team should have the mix of complementary skills, knowledge and

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resources to deliver the proposed research, science or technology or related activities, and to manage risk. Assessment must have particular regard to whether:

- a. the mix of skills is appropriate for the research;
- b. the team has the skills, knowledge and resources which give confidence in their ability to deliver the research; and
- c. the team has the appropriate Māori expertise for the project.

12. Only proposals that have been assessed as having sufficient quality against the Excellence assessment criterion under clause 11 of this Schedule will be assessed with regard to the following criterion:

a. For proposals in the “Protect and Add Value” category:

i. Impact.

- a. Benefit to New Zealand (weighted 25%). Research should have direct and indirect benefits or effect on individuals, communities or society as a whole, including broad benefits to New Zealand’s economic, social, human or natural capital. Assessment must have particular regard to:
 1. the scale and extent of potential benefits from the proposed research, science or technology or related activities;
 2. the extent of alignment with one or more areas of future additional value, growth or critical need for New Zealand; and
 3. the extent to which the project has identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
- b. Implementation Pathway(s) (weighted 25%). Research should have a credible pathway(s) to deliver public benefit to New Zealand that is not limited to a single firm or end user, and have a line of sight to impact. Assessment must have particular regard to:
 1. the credibility of end or next-user information, to confirm that the implementation pathway is appropriate for the state of the sector or the stage of the research;
 2. the credibility of implementation pathway(s), to deliver public benefits to New Zealand, not limited to a single firm or end user;
 3. the evidence of the strength of the relationships with end or next-users, and stakeholders;
 4. the mix of complementary skills and experience, within the team, relevant to achieving impact in the proposed impact areas; and
 5. whether there is sufficient input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) of the project, that is adequately resourced to ensure effective implementation.

b. For proposals in the “Transform” category:

i. Impact.

- a. Benefit to New Zealand (weighted 25%). Research should have direct and indirect benefits or effect on individuals, communities or society as a whole, including broad benefits to New Zealand’s economic, social, human or natural capital. Assessment must have particular regard to:
 1. the extent to which the outcome(s) enabled by the research are a Radical Change and/or a leap in performance versus the status quo, and whether the impact will also transform New Zealand’s economy, society or environment;
 2. the extent of alignment with one or more areas of future additional value, growth or critical need for New Zealand; and
 3. the extent to which the project has identified and evaluated the potential impacts for Māori.
- b. Implementation Pathway(s) (weighted 25%). Research should have an indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefit to New Zealand that is not limited to a single firm or end-user, and an understanding of the barriers to impact. Assessment must have particular regard to:
 1. the degree to which the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the enablers and barriers in potential implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand;
 2. the credibility of indicative implementation pathway(s) to deliver public benefits to New Zealand, not limited to a single firm or end user;
 3. identification of the indicative end or next-users, beneficiaries, and stakeholders;

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4. the mix of complementary skills and experience, within the team, relevant to achieving impact in the proposed impact areas; and
5. whether there is sufficient input from Māori at the appropriate stage(s) of the project, that is adequately resourced, to ensure effective implementation.

13. Once proposals have been assessed against both the Excellence and Impact assessment criteria in this Schedule, the Science Board will also assess them for alignment with investment signals in the Investment Plan and will apply the portfolio approach described in clause 8 of the main notice.

[1. health includes cost savings to the healthcare system](#)

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