



Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao Fellowships

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

Te Ara Paerangi – Future Pathways White Paper describes the desired future of our research, science and innovation system. It is a research system that:

- embeds Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- helps to improve the wealth and resilience of Māori and Pacific Peoples communities by being more responsive to Māori and Pacific Peoples
- grows workforce representation through dedicated fellowship schemes for Māori, Pacific Peoples and women.

This describes a vibrant research ecosystem that attracts and supports talent from all communities of Aotearoa New Zealand, and a system that creates new futures and career pathways for all.

The current research system needs to strengthen its ability to attract and retain Māori and Pacific talent, particularly in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Building our talent in these areas is key to ensure that Aotearoa's research system has the capacity, diversity and talent it needs to deliver its communities, including Māori and Pacific communities.

To help enable this future, the Government is funding a new short-term Fellowships opportunity, the Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao Fellowships. These Fellowships will help to build and strengthen a diverse STEM research workforce by investing in talented early- and mid-career Māori and Pacific researchers.

Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao refers to the early- and mid-career stage of scientific (Pūtaiao) researchers, when researchers are blooming and demonstrating their talent and potential (Puanga). At the same time, this career stage can be fragile and precarious. The Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao Fellowships will support researchers to be successful and progress to develop the new seeds for the next generation of STEM researchers.

Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao are to be administered by the Royal Society Te Apārangi (the Society) on behalf of the Ministry.

Objective

The objective of the Fellowship is to invest in Māori and Pacific Peoples to establish careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) research and to grow the network of Māori and Pacific Peoples in the research, science and innovation (RSI) system. The Fellowship will facilitate Māori and Pacific Peoples who are future leaders in STEM research to enter into or progress through the RSI workforce, building a career foundation that enables them to flourish.



Description

A panel will consider all applications to ensure they meet the objectives of the terms of reference for research undertaken in fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics at an eligible New Zealand research organisation. Fellowships of four years in length will be awarded by a randomised process.

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be either New Zealand citizens, or permanent residents, unless otherwise agreed by the Society.
- whakapapa Māori, declare as identifying as Pacific ethnicity, or both.
- have a PhD conferred on or after 01 January 2008, or have completed all requirements for their degree to be conferred at the time of application. The eligibility period for PhD conferral may be extended under the following scenarios at the discretion of the Society:
 - Extended sickness leave.
 - Part-time employment or career interruptions as a result of care giving responsibilities.
 - To account for work or service in the community or an industry.
 - Otherwise agreed by the Society.
- propose a research project under the Fellowship that relates to a STEM subject. The field(s) of clinical medical research are ineligible (e.g., practising medical, dental, psychological or nurse graduates).
- commence their programme of research within six months of the award notification, unless otherwise agreed by the Society.
- be supported by a New Zealand-based research organisation, with a supporting declaration that affirms that:
 - The applicant satisfies the eligibility criteria.
 - The applicant has good potential to develop and progress their career in STEM research.
 - The applicant is not permanently employed in a research position or employed on a fixed-term basis for a period that exceeds the Fellowship term, and the host will employ the applicant for the duration of the Fellowship.
 - The host will facilitate the provision of support and facilities that will enable the applicant to succeed in their Fellowship for the duration of the Fellowship.

Host eligibility:

- The host must be a New Zealand-based research organisation which can demonstrate it is capable and willing to provide support and facilities that will enable the applicant to succeed in their Fellowship.
 - Eligible hosts are research organisations that meet the following definition: 'An organisation that has sufficient internal capability for carrying out research, science or technology, or related activities.'



Additional eligibility criteria:

- In accordance with Russia Sanctions Act 2022 and in alignment with the Endeavour Fund 2023 Investment Round Gazette notice, the applicant and their research must 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 Russian war efforts.

Criteria

The award criteria must ensure successful proposals are consistent with the background and objectives of the Fellowship stated above. Criteria will be published on the Society's website and could consider the following, as required:

- Applicant track record and potential to establish, re-enter or progress their career in STEM research relative to opportunity.
- Suitability of the host's capability to support the Fellow (including cultural support and commitment to embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi) throughout the Fellowship.
- The clear articulation of a reasonable research plan with high likelihood to deliver research outcomes.

Selection Process

The selection process will be determined by the Ministry in conjunction with the Society and will include suitability assessment conducted by an independent panel followed by a stratified selection ballot of panel recommended applicants. The panel will aim to recommend a 2:1 ratio of early-career Fellowship awards to mid-career Fellowship awards, as far as practical based on the suitable applicant pool. The final award decisions will be made by the Ministry. The selection process will be published when the Fellowship opens for applications.



Operation

Fellowships are awarded on 0.8 Full Time Equivalent basis, unless otherwise agreed by the Society.

Two types of Fellowship will be awarded, early-career Fellowships (0-6 years post-PhD research experience) and mid-career Fellowships (7-15 years post-PhD research experience), with both Fellowship types having a four-year term.

The four-year early-career Fellowship will award per annum (excl. GST):

- \$80,000 towards the researcher's salary
- \$80,000 in organisational overheads
- \$40,000 for research-related expenses.

The total value of the early-career Fellowship is \$800,000.

The four-year mid-career Fellowship will award per annum (excl. GST):

- \$110,000 towards the researcher's salary
- \$110,000 in organisational overheads
- \$60,000 for research-related expenses.

The total value of the mid-career Fellowship is \$1,120,000.

Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

The Society will report to the Ministry on the Fellowships in accordance with the Funding Agreement. The reporting will include:

- information on the applications, monitoring of the Fellows and administration of the scheme
- any suggested changes to the scheme that might improve it obtaining its objective

The Ministry may request the Society to undertake an evaluation of the scheme once the initiative has ended in order to assess the success of the scheme.