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# Royal Society Te Apārangi

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# Who are we?

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*We support New Zealanders to explore, discover and share knowledge*

- We foster a culture that supports science, technology, and the humanities by:
  - raising public awareness, knowledge, and understanding
  - advancing education
- We will encourage, promote, and recognise excellence
- We support infrastructure for professional development
- We maintain a Code of Professional Standards and Ethics
- We provide expert advice on important public issues

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MARSDEN FUND

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A MARSDEN

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# Applying to the Marsden Fund

<https://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/marsden/>

November 2023

# What is the Marsden Fund?

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Named after Sir Ernest Marsden

Funded by the Government

- But NOT subject to the government's socio-economic priorities

Governed by the Marsden Fund Council

- Chair: Professor Gill Dobbie

Administered by the Royal Society Te Apārangi

# What does Marsden support?

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- Top-level research in science, engineering, maths, social sciences and the humanities, by top quality investigators
- Research that is:
  - Investigator-led, discrete projects (not mission-led)
  - At the international cutting edge
  - Novel

# Categories of grants

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	Maximum amount per year (ex GST)	Duration	Cycle
<b>Fast-Start (emerging researchers)</b>	\$120k	Up to 3 years	Two stages: February (EOI) and June (Full)
<b>Standard (open to all)</b>	Varies by panel (\$220-\$320k)	Up to 3 years	Two stages: February (EOI) and June (Full)
<b>Marsden Fund Council Award (open to all)</b>	\$1 million (may fund 0-2)	Up to 3 years	One stage ONLY: Full proposal due February

# What are my chances?

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- Success rate in 2023 was 13.3%  
(Standards: 12.8%; Fast-Starts: 14.5%; MFCA: 0%)
- 123 proposals were offered funding
- Historically, for each round, ~ 60% of all Principal Investigators on contracts are new. This is 59.4% for the 2023 round
- 88 new PIs in 2023 (47 Fast-Start, 41 Standard) out of 148 in total

# Eligibility

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- Open to New Zealand-based researchers:
  - Fast-Start grant: Contact PI full-time in New Zealand
  - Standard grant and Marsden Fund Council Award: Contact PI at least 0.5 FTE in New Zealand
- Applicants can only be a PI on **one proposal per year** (and an AI on one more)
- PI exclusion rule applies across **all grant categories**
- See guidelines for further criteria



# Assessment Criteria

	Fast-Start Award	Standard Award	Marsden Fund Council Award
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals must have the potential for significant scholarly impact because of the proposal's novelty, originality, insight and ambition</li> <li>Proposals must be rigorous, and should have a basis in prior research and use a sound research method</li> <li>The research team must have the ability and capacity to deliver</li> <li>Proposals should develop research skills in New Zealand, particularly those at the post-doctoral level and emerging researchers</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals must use an interdisciplinary approach to significantly expand research possibilities and ambition through new researcher and institutional links</li> </ul>
<b>Where relevant to proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals must consider the relation of the research to the themes of Vision Mātauranga and, where relevant, how the project will engage with Māori</li> </ul>		

# What is scholarly impact?

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*Scholarly impact is a demonstrable contribution to shifting understanding and advancing methods, theory and application across and within disciplines.*

- Applicants will **not be** required to make an impact statement in their proposal. Impact will be monitored at the level of the whole fund over a long timeframe.

# Changes for 2024

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- Narrative CV trial for Fast-Start applicants

Applicants will be able to choose whether they wish to use a narrative CV template or the usual template.

- Guidance given around EOI formatting / eligibility breaches
- Guidance given on the use of generative AI technologies

More details in the guidelines

# First Round

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- Closes in February
- Electronic submission
- Contact Research Office for log-in details

## **Fast-Start and Standard:**

- Submit an EOI - one page of proposed research, with supporting information
- Applications assessed by panels

## **MFCA:**

- Submit a Full application – five to six pages on proposed research, with supporting information; extra pages for addressing assessment criteria and specific methodology
- A panel choice is not required
- Applications assessed by MF Council.

# Second Round: Submission

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- For Fast-Start and Standard grants only
- Opens in May
- By invitation only
- Full application with greater detail on the proposed research (five to six pages, including background, aims, and methods sections)

# Second Round: Assessment

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For all grant categories:

- Proposals reviewed by *expert* referees
- Applicants can respond to referee reports
- Proposals are assessed together with referee reports, and applicant responses

# Feedback: EOI round

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After the **EOI round**, unsuccessful applicants and institutions will be told their proposal's score relative to all others considered by that panel, successful and unsuccessful, expressed as:

- First quintile (*best proposals*)
- Second quintile
- Third quintile
- Or 'Not ranked' (*Includes fourth and fifth quintile proposals*)

# Feedback: Fast-Start applicants

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- **For Fast-Start applicants at the EOI round, feedback will be available if they are unsuccessful and ranked in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quintiles.**
- Applicants will be notified whether they are eligible to seek feedback.



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# Tips for producing a quality proposal

More information also at

<https://www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/marsden/marsden-fund-application-process/submitting-a-proposal/hints-for-preparing-a-marsden-fund-proposal/>

November 2023

# Plan your proposal

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- Know the literature
- Carry out preliminary work
- Choose your team carefully: fit for the job; compatible; skilled (but no window dressing); opportunities for skills development.

*Note: Cannot change PIs, AIs at full round*

# Plan your proposal (continued)

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- Build your CV – recent performance important
- Use your support: Research Office; successful applicants; recent panellists; HoD / manager

*(and familiarise yourself with the Trusted Research Guidance)*

## Trusted Research

Guidance for Institutions and Researchers



PSR Protective Security Requirements

Science New Zealand

Te Pūkai Tara Universities New Zealand

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# Panel choice

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- Biomedical Sciences
- Cellular, Molecular and Physiological Biology
- Earth Sciences and Astronomy
- Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour
- Economics and Human & Behavioural Sciences
- Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences
- Humanities
- Mathematical and Information Sciences
- Physics, Chemistry and Biochemistry
- Social Sciences

*Read the panel definitions carefully  
Research the panellists  
Seek advice*

# Improve your chances

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- Choose a title that is descriptive of your research (avoid quirky titles)
- Complete all sections carefully, including Vision Mātauranga (if appropriate)
- Write clearly and for the audience
- Engage the reader
- Get people to read your abstract (including non-specialists)
- Plan a budget - is your proposed research realistic?
- **Read the guidelines**

# Tips: Respect

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## Respect your audience:

- Assessors of the proposals are research literate but non-specialist
- Summaries of successful EOIs are sent to specialist reviewers
- Summaries of successful Full proposals and MFCAs will be published

## Respect the rules:

- Titles and authors in reference list and CV, respect font size, etc.
- Ensure diagrams are useful and legible (if used).
- **Read the guidelines**

# Tips: Content

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## Hook – engage the reader!

- Use headings, e.g. background, aims, methodology

## Clearly state...

- Aims/hypothesis/discovery (risk is OK!)
- Importance
- Novelty
- Timeliness
- Methodology
- Why you should be the one to do the study

## Research plan should be...

- Robust
- Realistic
- Informative
- Accurate
- Appropriately referenced (not just to your own work)

# Tips: Language

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- Keep sentences short - make each one count
- Define abbreviations and use sparingly
- Check for grammatical and spelling errors
- Make it clear
- Avoid repetition (in particular, avoid repeating your summary in the background section)
- Avoid hype
- Avoid jargon and technical terms



# Vision Mātauranga - Background

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*“Proposals must consider the relation of the research to the themes of Vision Mātauranga and, where relevant, how the project will engage with Māori”*

- Opportunity, not obligation
- Focuses on contributions to New Zealand from Māori knowledge, resources, people
- Ethnicity of researcher irrelevant
- Four themes – indigenous innovation, Taiao (environmental sustainability), Hauora/Oranga (health and social wellbeing) and Mātauranga (indigenous knowledge).

The document is available on our website:

<https://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/marsden/application/submitting-a-proposal/vision-matauranga/>



# Vision Mātauranga - Process

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## EOI round:

Research that incorporates mātauranga Māori, engages with iwi or other Māori groups, concerns Māori wellbeing, utilises cultural or natural tāonga, or is of relevance to Māori, should indicate the appropriate Vision Mātauranga category or categories.

- A comment box will be provided on the portal to explain your rationale – **whether you indicate any Vision Mātauranga themes or not.**

## Full round (and MFC Award proposals):

- Detail your interactions with Māori groups
- Outline your track record on Vision Mātauranga research
- Supplement with material from institutional procedures on Vision Mātauranga
- **Ensure you provide resources for Vision Mātauranga costs in your budget**

Recognise that these engagements can improve your research

# Vision Mātauranga - Resources

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There are more detailed guidelines and resources available from our website on how to apply Vision Mātauranga in the context of a Marsden Fund proposal.

To decide whether to include Vision Mātauranga in your proposal, it may help to consider which of the following category or categories your research falls into:

- Research with no specific Māori component
- Research specifically relevant to Māori
- Research involving Māori
- Māori-centred research
- Kaupapa Māori research

A detailed set of questions which may be useful to consider is included in the EOI guidelines.

# Roles and Resources

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A chance to convince the panel that you have thought about the practical requirements of your work plan

Do:

- Discuss who will specifically do what (with a justification of your planned FTEs, including any students or post-docs)
- Discuss any resources specific to this project
- Include ethical or regulatory considerations (Fast-Start and Standard)
- Include a risk mitigation plan for COVID-19 if required (e.g. fieldwork access)

Do not:

- Take lots of space to describe the background and expertise of the PI(s) and AI(s) in general terms
- Use this space to extend the research section

# Roles and Resources – Fast-Start

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You should be involved in your own independent research – not just part of a larger group's programme

Do:

- Provide evidence for how the proposed research will support your independent research career  
**You will need to convince the panel of your independence!**
- Discuss opportunities for your career development
- Be clear on the role of a Mentor vs. that of an AI (if applicable)

Mentors:

- Should advise on project management, career development and professional development. Usually someone from your institution
- Should **not** contribute to research or experimental design, analysis and interpretation etc.

# Ethics: not just about compliance

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**For the Marsden Fund Council Award (and at the full round) you must convince the panel that you have thought through all the relevant issues of your research. This includes:**

- How your research affects the communities you are working with
  - Do not concentrate solely on your theoretical argument at the neglect of methodology, implementation and community safety
- That your consultation processes are meaningful, and not merely compliance exercises
- If applicable, an explanation of why you need to use live animals rather than alternatives

Poor explanations of these issues can undermine the panellists' confidence in your proposal and *seriously* reduce your chance of success

# Budget examples

Plan at EOI round, and note the cap for your discipline: HUM (\$220k), MIS (\$240k), SOC & EHB (\$290k), Others (\$320k)

	Fast-Start		e.g. EEB		e.g. SOC	
	FTE	Cost (\$k)	FTE	Cost (\$k)	FTE	Cost (\$k)
Yr time	0.2	24	0.2	25	0.4	50
Others	0.05	7	0.1	14	0.4	56
P'doc			1	84		
O'head		34		135		117
Student (PhD)		35		35		35
Expenses		20		27		32
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>		<b>320</b>		<b>290</b>

Council Award requires a full budget to be submitted at the first round

# Practicalities

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Read the guidelines (available now)

Interact with the portal early

- Don't leave accessing the portal until the last moment

Print out a draft to check:

- Correct CVs loaded?
- Has the portal converted your documents into PDFs?
- Have the images displayed correctly?  
Use files less than 1 Mb
- Has the text been converted without loss of formatting? (Check your browser!)



# 2024 Timetable

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- **Early Dec 23** Portal open
- **20 Feb** Closing date for first round  
(noon) *Check your institutional closing date!*
- **9 May** Invitations to second round
- **20 June** Closing date for full proposals
- **TBA:** Results Announcement  
(Early Nov)

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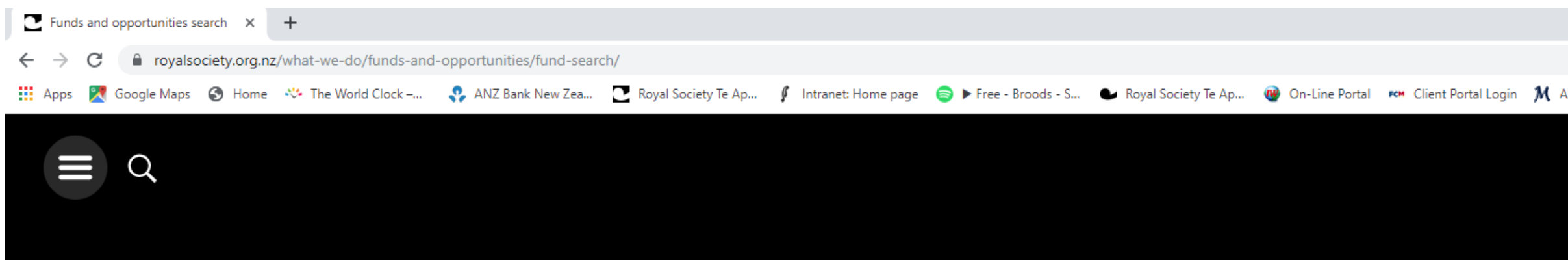
# Other Funding Opportunities

What is on offer from Royal Society Te Apārangi?

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# Funds and opportunities search



Home > What we do > Our funds and opportunities > Funds and opportunities search

## Funds and opportunities search

Use this search tool to find funds and opportunities you could apply for

I am a:

-- Select Option ▾

-- Select Option --

- Student (school)
- Postgraduate
- Early Career Researcher
- Researcher
- Teacher

I am seeking:

Post Graduate ▾

### OUR FUNDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

< Funds and opportunities search

> Marsden Fund

> Catalyst Fund

> Science Teaching Leadership Programme

> CREST Awards

> Powering Potential

> Charles Fleming Fund

> Raewyn Good Study Award for Māori and Pasifika Social Science Research

> RHT Bates Postgraduate Scholarship

# Research Funding at Royal Society Te Apārangi

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- **Marsden Fund** (\$80m p.a.); *Supporting excellent investigator-initiated research*
  - Marsden Fund Council Award, Standard and Fast-Start grants
- **Catalyst Fund** (\$2.5m p.a.) *Advancing global science partnerships for New Zealand*
  - Catalyst: Influence, Leaders and Seeding
- **Fellowships for Excellence:** *Supporting individual Fellowship and scholarship opportunities*
  - *More details to come – see MBIE announcement (Sep 2023)*
- **Human Frontier Science Program** (International award) *Funding high-risk, interdisciplinary, intercontinental, collaborative, fundamental life science research, with a philosophy of “science without borders”*
  - Long-term and Cross-Disciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships
  - Program and Emerging Investigator Grants

# Other Royal Society Te Apārangi opportunities

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- **Schools and Teachers;** *Providing teachers and students with learning and leadership opportunities*
  - Science Teaching Leadership, CREST, Powering Potential, Talented Schools Travel Award
- **Postgraduate Awards;** *Supporting with study scholarships and travel awards*
  - Raewyn Good Study Award for Māori and Pasifika Social Science Research, RHT Bates Postgraduate Scholarship, New Zealand Ecohydraulics Trust Travel Award, Falling Walls Lab New Zealand, Sir Hugh Kawharu Masters Scholarship
- **Early Career Researchers;** *Supporting with research fellowships and travel awards*
  - Falling Walls Lab New Zealand, World Data System Data Stewardship Award, James G. Hay Travel Award
- **Researchers;** *Supports with research funding, fellowships and awards*
  - James G. Hay Travel Award, Charles Fleming Senior Scientist Award, Charles Fleming Award for Environmental Achievement, Hutton Fund, Skinner Fund, Charles Fleming Publishing Award

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# Thank you

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