



# Māori Initiatives Fund Policy (He Ara Taituarā)

Version 2 – October 2024

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# About the Māori Initiatives Fund (He Ara Taituarā)

## Purpose

The purpose of the Māori Initiatives Fund (He Ara Taituarā)<sup>1</sup> is to support initiatives that build tangata whenua capability and capacity to participate in Council decision-making processes and operations.

There are two funding options available under the Māori Initiatives Fund (He Ara Taituarā):

- 1 The **He Ara Taituarā** Contestable Fund is available for iwi or hapū capacity and capability initiatives that contribute to Council outcomes and goals in the Bay of Plenty region. Funding is limited and applications will be assessed against common criteria.
- 2 The **Kaitiaki Grant** is a smaller fund to support iwi and hapū kaitiakitanga by contributing to capacity and capability projects that are in the conceptual stages of development. Project scopes may include:
  - Protection/preservation and promotion of mātauranga Māori in relation to natural resources and te taiao.
  - Consideration of capacity and capability to participate effectively in resource management decision-making.
  - Wānanga, scoping report, site visits, SHE Health and Safety Software NZ Ltd pre-qualification, supporting rangatahi in the taiao.

Toi Moana/Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) has specific legislative responsibilities under section 81 of the Local Government Act 2002 to support Māori capacity and capability in the decision making processes of Council. This has been reflected in the community outcome Te Ara Poutama and Partnerships with Māori strategic priority. The Māori Initiatives Fund (He Ara Taituarā) was established through the Long Term Plan 2024-2034 in part to support Council in meeting this obligation.

Note: This policy may be updated as a result of Councillor guidance as part of the review of Community Funding, due to be completed in 2024. The next full review of this policy is scheduled for 2026/27.

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<sup>1</sup> He Ara Taituarā translates to 'a pathway of support'.

# Phase One - Application

## 1.1 How to apply

### He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund

A total of \$200,000 is budgeted for in the 2024/2025 financial year and will only consider funding requests from iwi and hapū who submitted funding for capability and capacity initiatives via the Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 and were not successful. The funding requests will be assessed in accordance with the He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund Assessment process set out in Phase 2 of this policy.

In 2025/26 and 2026/27, a total of \$150,000 is budgeted for each funding round of the He Ara Taitaurā Contestable Fund. Council will receive applications during two funding rounds:

- The first funding round will be held in early 2025 and will receive funding applications covering the 2025/2026 financial year.
- The second funding round will be held in early 2026 and will receive funding applications covering the 2026/2027 financial year.

### Kaitiaki Grant

The Kaitiaki Grant is open for applications throughout the year from 1 July 2025.

A total of \$50,000 is budgeted for allocation via the Kaitiaki Grant in the 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 financial years. Funding will be available on a first approved basis until fully allocated.

Completed applications will be processed within four weeks of receiving the application.

## 1.2 Applicant eligibility

Funding will only be granted where:

- An applicant (defined as) - an iwi, hapū or affiliated entity/grouping, or Māori Land Trust with land interests within the Bay of Plenty Regional Council boundaries.

No application will be considered from:

- Iwi, hapū or Māori Land Trusts not predominantly based within the Bay of Plenty Regional Council's legal boundaries.
- Private individuals
- Commercial entities.

### 1.3 Project eligibility

An applicant will only be eligible to receive one grant per financial year.

No funding application will be considered where the initiative:

- is currently or has previously received support for the same work or deliverables from other Council Community funding schemes, and/or
- is inconsistent with a previous decision of Council, and/or
- does not deliver its results within the Bay of Plenty region.

### 1.4 Requirements for applications

- The initiative is consistent with the purpose of the fund.
- Has clear, realistic objectives that have measurable outcomes.
- Provides an outline of the project plan.
- Provides a draft budget of the project plan.
- Applicants to the He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund may need to include a detailed project plan that includes clear milestones, budget and timeframes where the request for funds is near or at the maximum amount of funding available for the He Ara Taituarā Fund in a financial year.

# Phase Two - Assessment

## 2.1 Assessment process

### He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund

Applications to the He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund are assessed through a two-step internal staff process. Step one is known as Screening and step two is known as Assessment. Any application that does not meet the requirements of step one, will not proceed to step two.

The Assessment stage involves relevant staff undertaking a comprehensive and holistic assessment of the application based on the criteria.

All evaluation records will be stored digitally and retained as records.

#### Step one: Screening

All He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund applications will be screened to ensure:

- (a) The He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund application form is complete and has been received by the closing date of the funding round.
- (b) The applicant and initiative meet the eligibility criteria. If the criteria are met, applications will proceed to step two.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff will work with applicants to ensure funding applications meet the eligibility criteria and applications are fully completed.

#### Step two: Assessment and decision-making

Funding applications will be evaluated on the criteria as set out in the Appendices.

The Assessment undertaken by relevant staff will consider the information provided in the application form with a focus on:

- 1 Alignment to the purpose of the Fund, Council community outcomes and goals.
- 2 Feasibility of application (including quality of project plan and budget, applicant's capacity and capability to deliver).
- 3 Supporting information. Applications will need to demonstrate how the proposed initiative will deliver the outcomes stated and contribute to building Māori capability and capacity.

Staff will seek advice from the Toi Moana Constituent Māori Councillors to ensure the funding is allocated equitably in the region and for initiatives that meet the purpose of the fund.

Following the Assessment of the Funding Applications, staff will provide a recommendation to Council for approval.

## **Kaitiaki Grant**

Applications to the Kaitiaki Grant are assessed through a two-step internal staff process. All submissions will be evaluated by Te Amorangi against common criteria.

### **Step one: Screening**

All Kaitiaki Grant applications will be screened to check that it meets the eligibility criteria, and the application is complete. If the criteria are met, applications will proceed to step two.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff will work with applicants to ensure funding applications meet the eligibility criteria and applications are fully completed.

### **Step two: Assessment and decision-making**

Stage two is an assessment of the application. If the requirements of the Kaitiaki Grant are met, a recommendation will be made to the relevant Manager and/or Team Leader who has the appropriate financial delegation.

## **2.2 Decision making**

Funding decisions are at the sole discretion of Council. Funding requests can be fully approved, partially approved or declined.

# Phase Three - Contracting

## 3.1 Approval process

There are three possible outcomes for an application:

- Full Funding Approved
- Partial Funding Approved
- Funding declined.

### **Full funding approved**

Council will require the final project plan, proposed outcomes, and budget details to be closely aligned with the application. Council will work with the applicant to set milestones and agree the timing for payment instalments linked to milestones where applicable, and then agree a final funding agreement signed by both parties.

### **Partial funding approved**

Applicants will receive a letter outlining which funding and project goals have been approved. Council will then require the final project plan, proposed outcome, and budget details to be closely aligned with the application. Council will work with the applicant to set milestones and agree the timing for payment instalments linked to milestones where applicable, and then agree a final funding agreement signed by both parties.

### **Funding declined.**

Council will provide the applicant with formal written notice that their application has been declined.

## 3.2 Contracting

A funding agreement or contract will be drawn up between BOPRC and the successful applicant. BOPRC will send the agreement to the group for signing along with any other required documentation.

## 3.3 Project timeframes

Successful applications should begin to access their allocated fund or grant within one year of the funding being approved. If the funds are not accessed after a year, the recipient will be contacted to discuss whether to continue or terminate the fund or grant. If the recipient has not initiated a plan to begin the project and/or the project is no longer viable, Council has the discretion to withdraw funds from the project and re-allocate through the He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund or Kaitiaki Grant.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff will work with applicants to assist them with progressing the project to completion where appropriate.



# Phase Four

## Monitoring and close

### 4.1 Progress reports

The applicant will provide BOPRC with progress reports on the milestones and agreed dates where applicable. BOPRC staff will work with applicants to assist them with meeting the provisions of the funding agreement/contract where it is appropriate to do so.

Council may at any time audit the project and the activities of the recipient in relation to the project. The recipient agrees to cooperate and provide all information to the Council that it requests as part of any such audit.

### 4.2 Final report

A final report on the achievement of the outcomes will be provided by the group on the agreed date and presented to Komiti Māori. A summary of the outcomes will also be added to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council website.

# Appendices

## He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund application assessment

The following information provides more detail on the evaluation process for the He Ara Taituarā Contestable Fund and is intended as guidance material for evaluators.

Funding applications will be considered against the criteria and indicative weightings set out in the table below. Applications that provide information and evidence to support each Criteria will receive a higher rating for each area.

### Strategic alignment (60 Points total)

#### Contribution to purpose of fund

Applications will need to demonstrate through the assessment criteria set out below how they aim to contribute to building Māori capacity and capability: (20 points)

| Weak  | Low   | Good   | Excellent   |
|---|---|--|---|
| e.g. No logical or explicit linkage between the initiative and how it will build capacity and capability. | Hypothetical but logical link between the initiative and how it will build capacity and capability. | Some published evidence of similar initiatives building capacity and capability. | Peer-reviewed evidence of similar initiatives building capacity and capability. |

#### Contribution to Te Ara Poutama

How will this proposal contribute to Te Ara Poutama and its goals? (20 points)

| Contribution            | Outcome   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Example: Te Ara Poutama | Example: Iwi will employ a dedicated resource in their taiao unit for environmental monitoring in their rohe. |

#### Contribution to other community outcomes

How will this proposal contribute to other community outcomes and goals of Council? (20 points)

| Contribution   | Outcome  |
|--|--|
| Example: Future ready communities/He hapori mata-hī awatea | Example: Hapū are implementing actions in a Climate Change Strategy and are building the capability of hapū members to undertake this mahi, using the support of scientists and experts. |

## Deliverability (40 Points total)

### Project plan assessment

Where on the following scale does the proposal's project plan fit? (10 points)

| Weak  | Low                                 | Good  | Excellent   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| No plan or list of deliverables with no dates | Some milestones and dates indicated | Clear milestones with clear dates aligned to expenditure. | Clear milestones with clear dates identified aligned to expenditure, demonstrated history of deliverability |

### Budget

Where on the following scale does the proposal's project plan fit? (10 points)

| Weak  | Low                                      | Good  | Excellent   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Budget is a vague request covering general expenses | Budget includes clearly identified costs | Budget includes clearly identified costs that are feasible for the quantum of work required | Budget includes clearly identified costs that are feasible for the quantum of work required supported by relevant experience and history of delivery. |

### Overall feasibility

Where on the following scale does the proposal's project plan fit? (20 points)

| Weak | Low | Good | Excellent   |
|------|-----|------|---|
|      |     |      | Project has a clear purpose, supported by a strong project plan and realistic budget. The applicant has appropriate skills and experience and a track record of delivery. |

## Kaitiaki Grant application assessment

The following information provides additional detail on the evaluation process for the Kaitiaki Grant and are intended as guidance material for evaluators.

### Supporting information

Applicants will need to demonstrate how they aim to contribute to supporting the purpose of the fund in order to be considered against the assessment criteria below:

#### Strategic alignment

The applicant will need to demonstrate how the grant will support the applicant in contributing to the community outcomes and goals of Council.

#### Deliverability

- 1 Project Plan assessment: the project plan has clear milestones with dates aligned to expenditure.
- 2 Budget: the budget includes clearly identified costs.
- 3 The costs are feasible for the work required under the project.

#### Other factors that may be considered

- Does Council have an existing relationship with the applicant.
- Has the project received funding from other Bay of Plenty Regional Council funding for the same work.
- Is the project primarily carried out by the iwi or hapū (not by another agency).
- Is there involvement of pūkenga or kaumātua.