

Request for Proposals 2025/26 News and Current Affairs

RFP: 1 o Ākuhata 2025
Open: 1 o Ākuhata 2025
Close: 22 o Ākuhata 2025
Decisions: 19 o Hepetema 2025

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Overview

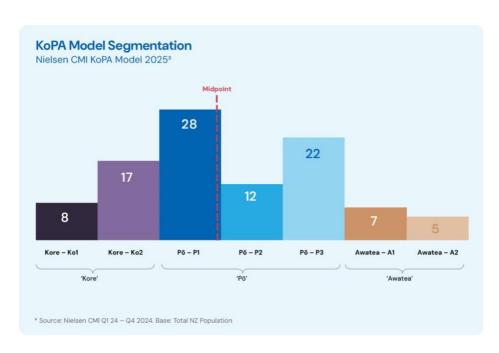
Hei Whakataki Introduction

Through its support of the Māori media sector, Te Māngai Pāho aims to contribute to the outcomes of the Maihi Karauna, the Crown's strategy for Māori language revitalisation. This includes ensuring New Zealanders value te reo Māori as an essential part of their national identity.

The Crown's strategy for Māori language revitalisation has three audacious goals for 2040:

- Goal 1: more than 85% of New Zealanders will value to reo Māori as a key part of national identity.
- **Goal 2: more than** 1,000,000 New Zealanders will have the ability and confidence to talk about at least basic things in te reo Māori.
- Goal 3: more than 150,000 Māori aged 15 and over will use te reo Māori as much as English by 2040.

In support of these goals, Te Māngai Pāho measures New Zealanders' attitudes toward te reo Māori with the KoPA model; an adaptation of the theoretical ZePA model developed by Professor Rawinia Higgins and Dr. Poia Rewi. Attitudes are segmented into three core categories: kore (zero); pō (passive) and awatea (active). The goal is to 'right-shift' the population along the continuum, into awatea. When investing in content, Te Māngai Pāho seeks to understand the contribution that content will make to the Crown's strategic goals and right-shifting its target audience. For more information about KoPA, visit: https://www.tmp.govt.nz/en/about/kopa-personas/



He Tāhuhu Kōrero Background

Since the establishment of Te Reo Whakapuaki Irirangi in 1994, Te Māngai Pāho has supported Māori journalism in television and radio. From existing television programmes like *Te Karere* and *Marae*, to the establishment of te reo Māori national radio news services *Ruia Mai* then *Waatea News*. Te Māngai Pāho has included funding for Māori news and current affairs in its strategies to revitalise and grow te reo Māori.

In Budget 2020, Te Māngai Pāho received funding for regional stories. Following an RFP process, four regional news providers – led by iwi radio stations – were selected to produce weekly stories for a centralised news hub. Te Māngai Pāho funded the technology to create the central distribution point for that content. The funding provided by the government for this initiative was for two years only.

Meanwhile funding continued to be distributed via contestable Diverse Content rounds for news and current affairs content. This changed in 2021, when Te Māngai Pāho introduced a specific round for news and current affairs content, excluding the National Māori Radio News which was considered a Radio initiative.

In 2022, Te Māngai Pāho was allocated \$5m of funding for three years to continue and expand the regional news providers initiative. In addition, the Public Interest Journalism Fund administered by NZ On Air contributed an additional, one off \$3m, to support the initiative. That three years of regional news support expires in June 2026. Current provider contracts expire in December 2025 and to ensure there is a full calendar year of activity in 2026, news providers and Te Māngai Pāho will need to prudently manage the available funding.

The potential reduction of funding beyond 2026 requires us to transition to a much more collaborative model to ensure the sustainability of the news and current affairs ecosystem. While duplication in the system may have enabled more stories to be told, it has also created a competition among providers for talent and resources that is ultimately underwritten by Te Māngai Pāho. With platforms also having reduced capacity to contribute, soon the only funding source for Māori news will be Te Māngai Pāho. In this funding round, applicants will be expected to show how they can leverage their existing infrastructure to deliver Māori news content without increasing the call on Te Māngai Pāho funding; to demonstrate genuine overheads and a fair contribution to shared cost centres. Early figures for 2027 suggest Te Māngai Pāho may invest \$7.5m in Māori news and current affairs.

A working group facilitated by Kawea Te Rongo (Independent Māori Journalists Association) was established to contribute to the development of a sustainable future-focused Māori news and current affairs model. The working group provided a set of recommendations to Te Māngai Pāho that have been instrumental in the design of our approach to news and current affairs in response to the changing landscape. We are grateful for the constructive approach inherent in those recommendations.

Te Māngai Pāho appreciates that this new approach to funding news and current affairs may be disruptive. We are also conscious that the RFP does not cover the full range of possibilities. It is our expectation that there will be a reasonably extensive contract

negotiation process once applications have been assessed and the Board has approved offers of funding. As always applicants are reminded that no funding will be released until both parties are comfortable with all of the contractual terms and a contract has been fully executed.

We also appreciate that single year funding contracts do not provide the confidence and certainty necessary to make considered long-term decisions. Our hope and expectation is that 2026 will be a year in which we all work together to discover what is possible in a modified news and current affairs landscape and iron out the wrinkles. That includes determining the medium to long-term funding requirements of the eco-system, and ensuring that Te Māngai Pāho, together with other funding agencies and platforms, has the capacity to meet those needs. Subject to certainty of funding for the 2027 year, Te Māngai Pāho will be prepared to consider multi-year contracts for applicants that have consistently delivered to an appropriate level.

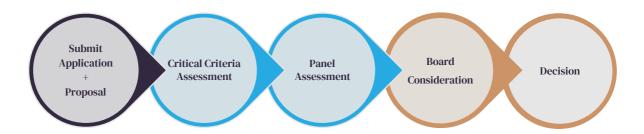
Finally, as pressure mounts on our limited funding Te Māngai Pāho will need to make difficult decisions about what it funds. The expectation is that this will see a stronger focus on funding te reo Māori content and reduced funding for training and capacity building in the expectation that there is funding available from education and workforce development sources for that purpose.

Te Pūtake Purpose

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is designed to support the creation of Māori news and current affairs content. This document outlines the news and current affairs funding priorities for Te Māngai Pāho in the 2025/26 financial year, for distribution during the 2026 calendar year and is divided into three separate sections. It also provides advice on the application process and timeline.

The content funded will need to contribute to the normalisation and wellbeing of te reo Māori. Te Māngai Pāho expects to allocate up to a total of \$10,000,000 (plus GST) across all news and current affairs initiatives for 2025/26 but reserves to its sole discretion the right to distribute a higher or lesser amount. As has been the case in previous years it is expected that where appropriate this amount will be supplemented by funding from NZ On Air.

Hātepe Process



Wātaka Timeline

Te Māngai Pāho staff will provide an opportunity for applicants to attend an online information session on **Tuesday 5 August 2025** – relevant times and links below. The purpose of the session will be to provide information on the process and criteria and answer any questions applicants may have.

1 o Ākuhata 2025	RFP Published	
1 o Ākuhata 2025	Round Opens	
5 o Ākuhata 2025	Information Session	
	1:00pm - <u>Current Affairs</u>	
	2:00pm - Regional News Providers	
	3:00pm – <u>National Hub</u>	
27 o Ākuhata 2025, 5:00pm	Round Closes	
19 o Hepetema 2025	Decisions Notified	
22 o Hepetema –	Contracting	
5 o Tīhema 2025		

Late applications may only be submitted with the approval of the Kaihautū of Te Māngai Pāho. Te Māngai Pāho reserves the right to extend the submission period at its sole discretion.

Ngā Kawatau Expectations

Performance Data and Reporting

Should your project go on to receive funding, there will be a contractual expectation to provide performance data and analytics. This is to enable Te Māngai Pāho to understand and evaluate how funded content contributes to the promotion of te reo Māori and Māori culture.

- Producers must report on content performance, including distribution, audience data and engagement.
- Te Māngai Pāho will source TV ratings for linear broadcasts and request viewership data for online/on-demand content from Platforms.
- For content released on other online platforms, producers must provide performance data, social media insights, and promotion/publicity details in the required format. Guidance on data collection is provided on our website at: https://www.tmp.govt.nz/en/funding/help-resources/.

Te Tono ā-Ipurangi Applying Online

You must be registered with Te Pūahatanga, the online application system operated by Te Māngai Pāho, to apply. Only applications submitted through this portal will be considered. Registrations will be accepted up to two business days before a funding

deadline. Applicants will not be able to submit proposals until all the required fields have been completed, so please do not leave completion of your application to the last minute.

You can save your application at any time throughout the process and come back to it via your dashboard prior to the deadline. Key compliance information from your Registered Provider data will automatically populate your funding Application.

Ngā Tikanga me ngā Herenga

Reserved Rights and Terms and Conditions

- You must bear all your own costs in preparing and submitting your proposal
- You represent and warrant that all information provided to us is complete and accurate
- We may rely upon all statements made in your proposal
- We may amend, suspend, cancel and/or re-issue the RFP at any time
- We may change the RFP (including dates), but will give all submitters a reasonable time to respond to any change
- Late proposals will only be accepted on the approval of the Kaihautū
- We may seek clarification of any proposal and meet with any submitter(s)
- We are not bound to accept the lowest priced conforming proposal(s), or any proposal.



2025/26 Current Affairs

He Tono Kaupapa Request for Proposals

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on applying for funding support for the creation of te reo Māori **Current Affairs.** If your interest is in being a <u>Regional News</u> <u>Provider</u> or the <u>National Hub</u>, please refer to those sections in this document.

Available Investment

Funding is available for experienced providers to produce current affairs content that will deliver te reo Māori and Māori-interest stories to diverse audiences. The content will also need to contribute to the normalisation and wellbeing of te reo Māori.

Te Māngai Pāho expects to allocate up to \$3,000,000 (plus GST) for current affairs content but reserves to its sole discretion the right to distribute a higher or lesser amount. Funding is allocated in accordance with our investment framework which expects to direct 60% of all content funding toward the creation of Fluent content (content containing 70–100% te reo Māori).

We invite applicants with projects that are ready for production to apply for funding of up to:

- \$1,800,000 (plus GST) for Fluent current affairs content
- \$1,200,000 (plus GST) for Receptive (30%-70%) current affairs content

Applications & Proposals

Applicants must complete an application form and provide a full proposal demonstrating they have a production-ready concept, and the capacity and capability to deliver it to professional standard in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The assessment criteria will provide you with insight into how applications and proposals will be assessed. Below is advice to help you align with criteria expectations.

General Advice

Accuracy of information is vital. Provide complete responses to each section to demonstrate production-readiness.

Applicant & Key Personnel

Demonstrate skill and experience in creating current affairs content in te reo Māori. Evidence of the applicant's commitment to te reo Māori and as kaitiaki of the proposed content is expected. Applicants must also provide assurance of their capacity and capability to meet the proposed schedule and deliverables alongside any other active contracts they may have with Te Māngai Pāho or others.

Te Reo Māori

Provide a rautaki reo Māori that demonstrates a clear approach to how the reo Māori percentage target will be met; describes how the proposed reo will positively impact audiences; and explain how the content will help preserve and promote te reo Māori. Provide robust evidence to substantiate the rautaki reo Māori including assurances for how the Poutiaki Reo will be involved in the creation process.

Content

In addition to demonstrating the capacity and capability to deliver in te reo Māori, the proposed current affairs content must adhere to the tenets of good journalism and be culturally appropriate. Applicants are encouraged to outline the mātāpono that underpin their approach to culturally appropriate journalism.

Audience Strategy

Applicants must be able to demonstrate an ability to reach audiences on digital platforms. Letters of support from platform partners and clear promotion and marketing strategies will strengthen a proposal. Strategies and plans should be supported by audience data and market insights to validate the proposed approach.

Data and Insights

For returning series: Applicants must include evidence demonstrating audience demand and the continued relevance of the content.

For new content proposals: Provide supporting market data to show the creative relevance of the concept and explain how the content will actively promote te reo Māori to the target audience.

Budget

A full and practical budget for your project is essential. We support fair pay and equity, and a budget that provides for intelligent use of local music. We also welcome wise use of resources and good value. Please identify all related-party costs and include them in above-the-line costs. Production Company Overheads (PCO) may not exceed 10% of below-the-line costs. Contingency may be factored in but the aggregate of Contingency and PCO should not exceed 15% of the below-the-line costs.

Aromatawai Assessment Criteria

Applicant and Key Personnel (15%)

- Capacity experience and capacity to deliver.
- Capability a highly respected journalism team with a record for good practice.
- Kaitiaki appropriate to guide the creation of content in te reo Māori.

Te Reo Māori (25%)

- Fluent content is a priority.
- Rautaki reo clear approach to delivering te reo Māori in content for a clearly identified reo target audience; clear strategy for "right-shifting" audiences.
- Te reo Māori genuine, natural use, preservation.
- Tikanga Māori approach to gathering and reporting proposed content is supported by a cultural safety plan.

Content (25%)

- Will deliver quality and culturally appropriate journalism.
- Will deliver high te reo Māori output and quality.
- Māori worldview is evident throughout.

- Content data insights from previously published content show evidence of audience engagement.
- Clear strategy for making content to appeal to the target audience.

Audience Strategy (20%)

- Platform, channel identified and committed, relevant for content.
- Platform data & insights evidence of an existing audience or ability to leverage an audience.
- Distribution relevant multi-platform approach with a clear plan for release.
- Promotion and marketing demonstrates the ability to attract and reach an audience, identifies tactics to be used for the creative proposition.

Budget (15%)

- Budget is well rationalised, reasonable, demonstrates experience.
- Clear correlation between budget and proposal.
- The budget and proposed language outcomes represent good value.

He Wā Kōrerorero Information Session

Te Māngai Pāho staff will provide an opportunity for RFP applicants to attend an online information session on **Tuesday 5 August at 1:00pm**. The purpose of the session will be to provide information on the process and criteria and answer any questions applicants may have.

The link to join the session is here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3745097198?omn=81806410703



2025/26 Regional News Providers

He Tono Kaupapa Request for Proposals

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on applying for funding support for **Regional News Providers**. If your interest is in <u>Current Affairs</u> or the <u>National Hub</u>, please refer to those sections in this document.

Core Function

A Regional News Provider is expected to provide the following core functions:

- 1. Produce Fluent te reo Māori and Māori-interest **news** content from a clearly identified region for the National Hub to the minimum specifications;
- 2. Facilitate the platforming of the regional **news** content that is produced on one or more platforms targeting a news audience from that region;
- 3. Provide editorial oversight of the **news** content it produces.

The focus of this RFP is on **news** content and applications for 'magazine' content should be submitted to a General Audience funding round.

Minimum Specifications

To ensure a regular flow of news content to both national and regional news audiences, applicants must be confident and able to demonstrate their capacity and capability to produce high interest news stories to the following minimum requirements for the National Hub:

Deliverables

Quantity	Te Reo Māori	Frequency	Interest
3	70-100%	Weekly	Local
2	70-100%	Weekly	National

Platforming

Digital – Social Media	Digital – On Demand	Radio
Video with audio track	Video with audio track	Radio scripts
Text to accompany post	Script for platform captions and subtitles	Scripted soundbites

Available Investment

Te Māngai Pāho expects to allocate up to \$5,000,000 (plus GST) across a maximum of seven Regional News Providers to provide core functions to the minimum specification but reserves to its sole discretion the right to distribute a higher or lesser amount.

General Advice

Accuracy of information is vital. Provide complete responses to each section to demonstrate production-readiness.

Applicants are encouraged to clearly identify the geography they propose to cover, and to provide a business case for the cost of providing that coverage and delivering to the minimum specification.

Te Māngai Pāho will be assessing proposals for iwi and rohe coverage, and cost efficiency. If an applicant has capacity to propose additional deliverables and outcomes, for the benefit of assessment, this should be reflected separately to the minimum specification.

Applicant & Key Personnel

Applicants must demonstrate their skill and experience in producing regional news content in te reo Māori. Evidence of the applicant's commitment to te reo Māori as kaitiaki of the proposed content is expected.

Applicants must also provide assurance of their capacity and capability to meet minimum specifications alongside any other active contracts they may have with Te Māngai Pāho or others.

Te Reo Māori

Provide a rautaki reo Māori that demonstrates a clear approach to how the reo Māori percentage target will be met; describes how the proposed reo will positively impact audiences; and explain how the content will help preserve and promote te reo Māori. Provide robust evidence to substantiate the rautaki reo Māori including assurances for how the Poutiaki Reo will be involved in the creation process.

Content

The produced content must be founded on clear and culturally appropriate journalistic practice. Applicants are encouraged to outline the mātāpono that underpin their approach to culturally appropriate journalism. They should also describe how a Māori worldview is expressed in the content, while maintaining tikanga Māori practices.

Audience Strategy

Applicants must demonstrate clear relationships with established platforms by providing support letters from those partners, along with data that evidences the platform's audience engagement and reach.

A comprehensive promotional and marketing strategy should be included, outlining how you will generate attention for the proposed content.

Wherever possible, strategies and plans should be supported by appropriate data, including audience figures for previous seasons of the proposed content, or market insights to validate the proposed approach and demonstrate its potential impact.

Data and Insights

For returning content proposals: Applicants must include evidence demonstrating audience demand and the continued relevance of the content.

For new content proposals: Provide supporting market data to show the creative relevance of the concept and explain how the content will actively promote te reo Māori to the target audience.

Budget

A full and practical budget for your project is essential. We support fair pay and equity, and a budget that provides for intelligent use of local music. We also welcome wise use of resources and good value. Please identify all related-party costs and include them in above-the-line costs. Production Company Overheads (PCO) may not exceed 10% of below-the-line costs. Contingency may be factored in but the aggregate of Contingency and PCO should not exceed 15% of the below-the-line costs.

Aromatawai Assessment Criteria

Applicant and Key Personnel (20%)

- Capacity experience and capacity to deliver.
- Capacity to deliver minimum specifications.
- Capability a highly respected journalism team with a record for good practice.
- Kaitiaki appropriate to guide the creation of content in te reo Māori.

Te Reo Māori (25%)

- Reo Māori content priority.
- Rautaki reo clear approach to delivering te reo Māori in content for a clearly identified reo target audience, clear correlation between rautaki reo and proposal.
- Te reo Māori genuine, natural use, preservation.
- Tikanga Māori approach to gathering and reporting proposed content is supported by a cultural safety plan.

Content (20%)

- Capability to deliver high te reo Māori output and quality.
- Māori worldview capability to deliver quality and culturally appropriate journalism.
- Content data and insights from previous performances show high audience engagement.
- Clear strategy for making content to appeal to the target audience.

Audience Strategy (20%)

- Platform, channel identified and committed, relevant for content.
- Platform data & insights evidence of an existing audience or ability to leverage an audience.
- Distribution relevant multi-platform approach with a clear plan for release.
- Promotion and marketing demonstrates the ability to attract and reach an audience, identifies tactics to be used for the creative proposition.

Budget (15%)

- Budget is well rationalised, reasonable, and demonstrates experience.
- Clear correlation between budget and proposal.
- The budget and proposed language outcomes represent good value.

He Wā Kōrerorero Information Session

Te Māngai Pāho staff will provide an opportunity for RFP applicants to attend an online information session on **Tuesday 5 August at 2:00pm**. The purpose of the session will be to provide information the process and criteria and answer any questions applicants may have.

The link to join the session is here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3745097198?omn=82411132056



2025/26 National Hub

He Tono Kaupapa Request for Proposals

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on applying for funding support to become a **National Hub** for Māori news content. If your proposal is for <u>Current Affairs</u> or <u>Regional News Providers</u>, please refer to those sections in this document.

Core Function

The National Hub is a new initiative to support the Māori news eco-system. Its core function will be to provide centralised storage of news items from the Regional News Providers and manage access rights to approved platforms and publishers.

Regional News Providers will retain intellectual property rights of the content. However, as with all Te Māngai Pāho funded content, Regional News Providers will grant Te Māngai Pāho – and by association, the National Hub – a non-exclusive right in perpetuity to reproduce and broadcast the content created by this funding for the purpose of achieving the Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities of Te Māngai Pāho.

A set of rules governing access and use of the content will need to be established by the National Hub, which publishers must agree to before they are provided with access. License and approvals will continue while Te Māngai Pāho is invested in this initiative. Te Māngai Pāho expects, upon its exit from this initiative or its closure, that content be returned to the Regional News Provider it came from for archiving and management thereafter, unless the Regional News Provider agrees otherwise.

The National Hub will be staffed to provide editorial, technical and skilled support to approved Regional News Providers. The same staff will provide coordination support to Regional News Providers so that they can collaborate and share resources and leads effectively.

Other Functions

The National Hub *may* have capacity to produce Māori news stories of national interest but only in areas not covered by Regional News Providers, for example, Parliament in Wellington, and Central Auckland. Any news content produced by these reporters must be made available to all publishers on the National Hub.

Additionally, the National Hub *may* have capacity to curate news bulletins from National Hub content for non-digital platforms, *if* it can prove demand from an existing news platform, and that the platform (or platforms) has a significant audience.

Available Investment

Te Māngai Pāho expects to allocate up to \$2,000,000 (plus GST) for a National Hub but reserves to its sole discretion the right to distribute a higher or lesser amount. Te Māngai Pāho prefers to invest in existing infrastructure that requires few modifications to meet the needs of the eco-system. This funding will not support establishment of a new audience platform.

General Advice

Accuracy of information is vital. Provide complete responses to demonstrate a high level of news management experience, journalistic integrity and applied technical knowledge relevant to being a National Hub.

Applicant & Key Personnel

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that their company and team have the credentials to provide journalistic and technical experience, capacity and capability to become the National Hub. Demonstration of commitment to te reo Māori and values that align with te ao Māori are essential.

Rautaki Māori

Provide a rautaki Māori that demonstrates a clear approach to hosting te reo Māori content and a plan for supporting te reo Māori in the workplace.

If the proposal contains capacity for story gathering in areas not covered by Regional News Providers, in the rautaki Māori, provide insight into quality assurance and review procedures for te reo Māori content. Also describe how a Māori worldview will be expressed in the content, while maintaining tikanga Māori practices.

Content Support

Detail the approach you will take to ensure you can provide suitable support to Regional News Providers. Explain how the National Hub will coordinate with the Regional News Providers to ensure important news stories are covered. Demonstrate understanding of formatting for digital and radio platforms.

If the proposal contains capacity for story gathering in areas not covered by Regional News Providers, applicants are encouraged to outline the mātāpono that underpin their approach to culturally appropriate journalism.

Technical Capacity

Discuss the technical infrastructure you have available to support hosting and managing the content.

Budget

A full and practical budget for your project is essential. We support fair pay and equity, and a budget that provides for intelligent use of local music. We also welcome wise use of resources and good value. Please identify all related-party costs and include them in above-the-line costs. Production Company Overheads (PCO) may not exceed 10% of below-the-line costs. Contingency may be factored in but the aggregate of Contingency and PCO should not exceed 15% of the below-the-line costs.

Aromatawai Assessment Criteria

Applicant and Key Personnel (20%)

- Demonstrates a highly respected journalism team with a record for good practice.
- Demonstrates an experienced and highly capable technical team.
- Demonstrates staff and resource to support the proposed National Hub.
- Kaitiaki appropriate to support the creation of content in te reo Māori.

Rautaki Reo Māori (20%)

- Clear correlation between rautaki and proposal.
- Māori values are clear and align with the proposal.
- If applicable, a clear approach to delivering te reo Māori in content.
- If applicable, assurance given that te reo Māori in content will be high quality.

Content Support (20%)

- Demonstrates a clear approach to providing support to Regional News Providers.
- Demonstrates understanding of formatting for digital and radio platforms.
- If applicable, demonstrates understanding of the Parliamentary press gallery.
- If applicable, demonstrates strong relationships within Auckland Central.

Technical Infrastructure (20%)

- Clear evidence of existing infrastructure and few modifications required to serve as the National Hub.
- Demonstrates capability to provide secure storage of news content and manage access right.
- The business case for this technical infrastructure demonstrates experience and understanding of what is needed.
- Is highly compatible with other systems in the eco-system.

Budget (20%)

- Budget figures are accurate.
- Budget is well rationalised, demonstrating experience.
- Clear correlation between budget and proposal.
- The budget and proposed language outcomes represent good value.

He Wā Kōrerorero Information Session

Te Māngai Pāho staff will provide an opportunity for RFP applicants to attend an online information session on **Tuesday 5 August at 3:00pm**. The purpose of the session will be to provide information the process and criteria and answer any questions applicants may have.

The link to join the session is here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3745097198?omn=85074637266