



Request For Proposals  
4 June 2026

# 2026–27 Reo Māori Content Co-Fund

Thu 4 Jun 2026	RFP Published Round Opens
Wed 17 Jun 2026, 1:00pm	Info Session
Thu 27 Aug 2026, 5:00pm	Deadline
Fri 30 Oct 2026	Decisions Notified

Queries:

[content@tmp.govt.nz](mailto:content@tmp.govt.nz)

[funding@nzonair.govt.nz](mailto:funding@nzonair.govt.nz)

# Hei Whakataki

## Introduction

Te Māngai Pāho is a contributor 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 te 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.

Normalisation plays a part in language revitalisation strategies worldwide, and media is one of the strongest tools at its disposal because it shapes what people see, hear, and expect. Te Māngai Pāho invests in the production of reo Māori content for delivery on locally owned or managed media platforms for this reason.

As outlined in the Broadcasting Act 1989, NZ On Air has a statutory remit to promote Māori language and culture. [Te Pae Tata](#) is NZ On Air's [rautaki Māori](#), which outlines the agency's commitment to Māori content creators and audiences.

## Te Pūtake

### Purpose

Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air are joining forces once again to fund high-quality, reo Māori screen content for a broad audience. The purpose of the co-fund is to support projects that neither agency can fund alone.

Research into the funding of Māori content has shown that most public funding for Māori film and television content goes toward Non-Fiction production. [Audience research](#) tells us that Māori audiences appreciate comedy and drama. To address the funding imbalance and serve our audiences, in this co-fund we are looking to preference ambitious Scripted projects with scale. These may be projects that are looking to access the NZSPR (New Zealand Screen Production Rebate), to offset the ask of our agencies, or those that seek full funding. We will also accept applications for ambitious Non-Fiction projects with scale however, priority will be given to Scripted and Scripted Development.

Ambitious projects with scale should have high production values, well-crafted scripts or well researched ideas, that will stand out in the media marketplace. They will have strong platform support, including promotional budgets that aspire to attract a large local audience.

We will not accept applications seeking less than \$1m from this co-fund unless it is an NZSPR project that requires a lesser amount of gap financing.

For kaupapa that are looking to access the NZSPR, we aim to be 'last-in' funders, providing the final piece of the finance plan to ensure projects can proceed promptly. We will give preference to applications that include firm letters of offer that support the finance plan. Applications with gaps in their finance plan will be given lower priority.

The content we are looking to support is Aotearoa-centric, engaging, and compelling. It will positively impact New Zealanders' attitudes toward te reo Māori by giving the audience an experience of the language that is inclusive and within their reach.

Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air are prepared to allocate up to \$8m of funding but reserve at their discretion the right to distribute a greater or lesser amount in this funding round.

## Wātaka

### Dates and Deadlines

Thu 4 Jun 2026	RFP Published Round Opens
Wed 17 Jun 2026, 1:00pm	Info Session
Thu 27 Aug 2026, 5:00pm	Deadline
Fri 30 Oct 2026	Decisions Notified
Wed 30 Jun 2027	Contracting Deadline

Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air reserve the right to vary any of the above dates as they deem necessary. Late submissions are at the sole discretion of the Kaihautū of both agencies.

## He Hui Whakamārama

### Information Session

Te Māngai Pāho Kaihāpai (advisors) and NZ On Air funding advisors will be available to provide clarity on priorities, processes and criteria; and to answer questions at an online session at 1:00pm on Wednesday 17 June 2026. RSVP at [funding@nzonair.govt.nz](mailto:funding@nzonair.govt.nz). The link will be sent to you prior to the session.

## Te Tono

### Application & Proposal

Companies, trust and organisations are eligible to apply. Individuals (sole traders) are ineligible to receive funding in this round.

It is imperative that proposals contain the following sections to ensure information can be found easily and consistently against the assessment criteria.

- Creative Concept
- Te Reo Māori
- Audience Strategy
- Schedule and Budget
- Applicant and Key Personnel

While there is no limit on the number of pages that we will accept, for the benefit of clarity and assessment, we expect applicants to keep their applications succinct while including all the information we require.

## Aromatawai

### Proposal Assessment

We expect this funding round to be heavily over-subscribed, with fewer than half of applications successful.

Applications and proposals will be considered by a panel of assessors including Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air staff and external professionals as part of a contestable process.

As well as being assessed for production-readiness (see criteria below), applications will be considered against others to ensure that a range of projects are funded, with complementary audience outcomes. Factors that will influence decision-making could include how different the project is from others recently funded – by each agency and by the co-fund, – and how strong the application is overall when compared with others received in the round.

The assessment panel will agree on which proposals should be recommended to receive offers of funding (including whether any proposals should be recommended subject to conditions). The assessment panel's recommendations will then be provided to an approval committee made up of Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air board member representatives, who will meet to discuss the recommendations and decide which proposals are to receive an offer of funding and whether any should be made subject to conditions.

The approval committee is the decision maker, and its decisions may differ from the assessment panel's recommendations.

Applicants will then be notified of final decisions.

## Ngā Paearu | Criteria for determining production-readiness

### Te Auahatanga | Creative (25%)

- Originality
- Appeal
- Demonstrates a Māori worldview throughout

### Te Reo Māori | Māori Language (20%)

- Quality of reo
- Quantity of reo
- Kia māhorahora te reo – how the project will have impact for te reo Māori

### Te Rautaki Pāho | Audience Strategy (20%)

- Target audience
- Platform potential
- Marketing and promotion plan

### Wātaka me Te Tahua | Schedule and Budget (15%)

- Budget and schedule are realistic and efficient
- Budget and proposed language outcomes represent good value

### Te Kaitono | Applicant and Key Personnel (20%)

- Demonstrates experience, skill, success and capacity to deliver

## He Kawatau

### Expectations

If your project receives funding, the final content must be made available to Whakaata Māori and Māori+ following a short exclusivity period on your primary platform. This does not include content for social media channels.

## Te Tono ā-Ipurangi

### Applying Online

To apply, you must first register with [Te Pūahatanga](#), the online application system operated by Te Māngai Pāho. Registrations can take up to three days to process so we encourage producers to register well in advance of the funding deadline. Applicants will not be able to submit applications until all required fields are completed. You can save your application at any time throughout the process and come back to edit right up to the deadline. Only applications submitted in Te Pūahatanga will be assessed.

## Ngā Tikanga me ngā Herenga

### Rights, 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.
- We may accept late proposals and may waive any irregularities or informalities in the RFP process.
- 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.

## He Kupu Āwhina

### Advice to Applicants

Advice provided in this section is current at the date of publication. Applicants are not limited to this advice and may seek additional advice from a Kaihāpai (Te Māngai Pāho Content advisor) or Funding Advisor (NZ On Air advisor). Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air reserve the right to update this advice.

#### Production Readiness

1. Production readiness is demonstrated throughout the proposal and is an outcome of assessment.
2. Your application should demonstrate that your project is **ready to go into production**. Any successful project will need to meet a high bar for reo Māori, have strong platform attachment, and demonstrate that it could not be produced without the support of this funding.

#### Scripted

1. Scripted funding is for drama or comedy projects that have scripts, a season outline, well-developed characters, and a compelling story.
2. An attention-grabbing premise complemented by world class production values is the highest priority. Themes that convey a Māori worldview and that are supported by a high quality rautaki reo will stand out.

#### Scripted Development

1. Where applicants do not have a complete pilot script, season outline or character arcs, they may apply for funding to develop these for an application to a future co-fund or other funding round.
2. Projects that apply for Scripted Development funding should have the support of a primary platform. Platforms are not required to match-fund development but investment from the platform will strengthen an application.
3. Your application should describe how you plan to use the development funding and demonstrate good insight into how additional development will get your project ready for production.
4. Your Development application should include a clear approach to te reo Māori.
5. Development funding received in this round does not guarantee production funding; it simply sets you up to make a more persuasive pitch to a future round.
6. We expect to support a small number of projects for Scripted Development with up to \$30k per project.

### Non-Fiction (Factual)

1. Any Non-Fiction project funded in this round will need to have a high quality rautaki reo Māori, and strong platform attachment.
2. Non-Fiction projects that require significant research, tell a compelling story and demonstrate that they could not be produced without the support of this funding will have the strongest advantage.

### Music

1. Music is a valuable tool when telling stories on screen. We encourage all projects that are applying for funding to consider using waiata reo Māori and music from Aotearoa in their production.
2. You should ensure that you allocate a realistic amount of pūtea in your budget for your music needs including music supervision, sync licensing, composition, performance, and recording.
3. Proposed music lines in your budget will be ringfenced during contracting and will not be approved for other purposes during production.
4. We will not accept applications for sync licensing for projects that have previously received production funding.

### Marketing & Promotion

1. The results of the [Where Are the Māori Audiences?](#) research reinforced the importance of marketing and promotion in order for local content to reach Māori audiences.
2. Proposals must contain a clear audience strategy for the content, including marketing and promotion.
3. We expect all applications to include budget lines for promotion and creation of marketing assets. You should demonstrate how your content will reach its intended audience and how you will use the marketing pūtea in your budget to do this.
4. Proposed marketing and promotion lines in your budget will be ringfenced during contracting and will not be approved for other purposes during production.

### Content for General Audiences

1. Proposals should demonstrate that content for General Audiences is suitable for consumption by anyone, regardless of age, background, or familiarity with the topic.

2. Content, however, should be pitched toward a particular segment of the general audience of Aotearoa for engagement and reo Māori impact.

### Standards

1. All proposed content must comply with the Broadcasting Act 1989, in particular, the programme standards specified in section 4(1) of the Broadcasting Act 1989 and all other television standards, codes of practice, rules, statutes, and regulations applicable to the broadcast of the Programme and to the Platform, including but not limited to:
  - (i) Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act 1993
  - (ii) YouTube Community Guidelines

### Platforms

1. Platforms are an integral part of any audience strategy. Your content should be made for an established, local, free-to-access platform with commissioning oversight and an existing audience.
2. New Zealand media companies that offer commissioning oversight include TVNZ (including TVNZ+), Whakaata Māori (including Māori+), and Sky (including Three, Sky Open and ThreeNow) and RNZ. These are recognised commissioners of Scripted content and Scripted Development, and Non-Fiction content. Contact them directly for information about their commissioning priorities and support.
3. Because this co-fund is seeking large-scale scripted projects, priority will be given to projects for platforms such as TVNZ, Whakaata Māori and Sky (including Three) based on their scripted commissioning capacity and audience reach.
4. We expect to receive access to relevant data and analytics from the chosen platform to enable effective evaluation of the investment and its KoPA impact.

### Returning series

1. Returning series must provide evidence of the previous season's audience numbers and engagement rate; continued demand; and relevance.

### New series

1. New series ideas should be supported by evidence of a market and audience for the proposed content.

### Creative

1. Proposals must contain a clear creative section about the content.
2. Provide, in depth:
  - (i) Synopsis
  - (ii) Key themes
  - (iii) Tone and style;
  - (iv) What makes it original or distinctive

(v) Why this content, now

3. If pitching **Scripted** content, provide evidence to demonstrate the project is fully-developed and production-ready such as characters, story arcs, scripts.

### Te Reo Māori

1. Proposals must contain a clear rautaki reo for the content.
2. The rautaki reo should explain how te reo Māori will appear creatively within the content.
3. It should also outline the responsibilities of the Poutiaki Reo and other reo personnel, and what processes will be followed to ensure quality assurance.
4. Include an explainer about how your project will contribute to the Te Māngai Pāho goals of right-shifting the population along the KoPA continuum. This includes how your content might contribute to the status of te reo Māori.

### Audience Strategy

1. Proposals must contain a clear audience strategy for the content.
2. Projects must have at least one committed and established, local, free-to-access platform with commissioning oversight and an existing audience to provide support during production and promotion.
3. If proposing a returning series: give evidence of the previous season's audience; continued demand and relevance.
4. If proposing a new idea, use market data to show relevance and opportunity for the project.
5. Further, provide details of your marketing, promotional, and/or publicity strategy that will enhance discoverability and bring attention and audience to the content.

### Schedule

1. Proposals must contain a clear production schedule.
2. The schedule must show total weeks of production and include milestone dates for the production and funding contract.

### Budget

1. Proposals must contain a clear and detailed budget.
2. **Related-party costs** (e.g. applicant-owned asset hire to the production; applicant fees and payments) **must be placed above the line.**

3. Production Company Overheads (PCO) **may not exceed 10%** of **below the line** costs and when combined with Contingency the aggregate should not exceed 15% of below the line costs.
4. Consider operating in line with agreed industry standards as expressed in the Screen Industry Workers Act and The Blue Book (The Screen Industry Guild of Aotearoa New Zealand).

#### **Applicant and Key Personnel**

1. Proposals must contain a clear applicant and key personnel section.
2. Provide a business profile and key personnel bios to validate experience and ability to deliver the proposed project.
3. Companies, trusts and organisations are eligible to apply.
4. Individuals (sole traders) are ineligible to receive funding in this round.