

NZ Youth Media Fund - *Within My Reach*

Funding Round Information for Funding Applicants

Request For Proposals (RFP) for Youth Audiences

5 October 2023

A. Purpose

NZ On Air is looking to fund a variety of bold, innovative local projects that will reach and resonate with 15 - 24-year-old audiences on the platforms they find their content.

We are currently seeking two-page pitches for digital first, social media native Scripted (fiction) and Non-Fiction (factual) video content for 15 - 24-year-olds.

Projects shortlisted through the two-page pitch process will be invited to submit full proposals to apply for production financing in Round Toru (Jan/April 2024).

In Round Toru, we will be accepting applications for both development and production funding for scripted youth projects. Producers intending to apply for development funding for content targeting youth do not need to apply to the two-page pitch round, but are encouraged to reach out to thomas@nzonair.govt.nz or one of our funding advisors via funding@nzonair.govt.nz to discuss their application ahead of the funding round opening in Jan '24.

B. Introduction

NZ On Air's funding strategy is founded on core public media principles. These include enriching the New Zealand cultural experience, improving diversity of media content in many forms, ensuring content is accessible, strengthening community life, and promoting informed debate. Our publicly funded content may entertain, and it will add cultural value.

Please refer to our [Youth Funding Strategy](#) for research insights and background on this initiative.

If you are new to our funding application process and would like further guidance on what to include in your application, how to meet specific funding criteria, or if you have any questions regarding this RFP, please feel free to get in touch with one of our funding advisors via funding@nzonair.govt.nz.

C. Overview

In this financial year, NZ On Air has earmarked ~\$5 million of contestable funding to support the creation of Scripted and Non-Fiction youth content and industry mentoring and training initiatives for younger creators.

We aim to allocate funding for two significant Scripted projects, each ranging from \$750,000 to

\$1 million, along with an additional 8-10 projects of diverse budgets and scales, all within the confines of the available funding. We may adjust this based on the proposals we receive.

Within My Reach is both the name, and kaupapa of the initiative and we are seeking well-thought out, adequately budgeted projects that balance ambition with feasibility to make social-first screen content.

We are looking for:

- Bold, edgy, risky concepts from distinctive voices with a clear, strong vision.
- Easily digestible and bite-sized content that's built to flow freely across multiple platforms, in many forms so it can find young people wherever they are.
- Aspirational content that is by youth, for youth and touches on the audience's unique culture, interests, and needs.
- Breakthrough content with a demonstrable ability to be buzz worthy and generate social currency.
- Projects that are clearly informed and underpinned by our [research](#) findings into the audience's unique media habits, demographic diversity and content preferences (see link to G. Useful Resources below).
- Innovative proposals with a clear understanding of the algorithm and marketing drivers for their audience - and a plan to utilise and mobilise the algorithm to ensure the content connects with the intended audience.

In addition:

- We welcome projects by, for and about Māori and utilising te reo Māori as part of Irirangi Te Motu | NZ On Air's ongoing commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and our Rautaki Māori.
- We are particularly interested in projects that have the inherent capacity to seamlessly incorporate and platform local music, and these will be prioritised. Specifically, we are interested in supporting initiatives with aspirations to establish themselves as enduring and influential music brands primarily driven by social media. We are seeking a marquee project that has the potential to evolve into a prominent voice within local youth culture, possibly integrating live music performances, student radio, and social media-led interactivity. The project could be either a fresh initiative or an expansion of an existing brand or format, provided that it has a proven and steadily increasing audience among young people.
- We will also consider supporting established, returning digital-first content from teams with a proven primary audience of 15 - 24-year-olds.
- Content must be free to access for New Zealand audiences.

Our [research](#) has identified several key preferences among youth audiences:

Modern NZ Humour: Young people appreciate humour that is current and 'of today.' They value humour that represents their experiences and finds opportunities to be inclusive of the diverse

cultures within New Zealand. Importantly, humour should not feel forced or scripted but should naturally fit within the narrative.

New Zealand Life and Culture: Youth want content that helps them connect with their homeland. Celebrating the diversity of people, lifestyles, and cultures within New Zealand is important. Representing the youth themselves on screen contributes to their sense of connection and pride in their country.

Fiction Content: While comedy, documentaries, and reality TV have been prominent in local content, youth are eager to see more engaging dramas, romances, thrillers, and horrors that reflect their interests and creativity.

Raising Awareness of Social Issues: Young people are seeking self-acceptance and a sense of belonging through better representation on screen. They want to see important social topics such as mental health, racism, LGBTQ+ rights, sexism, and more depicted in mainstream media to offer a realistic portrayal of contemporary life.

D. Guidelines

Your two-page application should include:

- A creative synopsis and overview of the content.
- An explanation of why you want to make this content, your passion for it and why it should be made now. This should also touch on any cultural relationships you have to the content you are making or the story you are telling.
- An audience statement about why you believe your project will be appreciated and engaged with by the intended audience. Including any strategies you've identified that will help your content crack the algorithm.
- An indicative budget including, if available, any resources you'll be bringing to support the financing outside of NZ On Air funding.
- Bios and CVs for the key creative team.
 - The creative team responsible for the project must include a producer and director (or equivalent roles relevant to the type of project) with at least one credit in the same role on a comparable project which has been publicly released (a link to this project should be provided). The project could be a prior funded series project, commercial content, your own social media-first content, or a short film.
 - In the spirit of reaching young people by creating content by youth, for youth, projects with key personnel aged 18 - 34 will be prioritised.
- To support the capability development of selected teams, the form will include questions about your key values and areas you identify as opportunities for growth and professional development in your creative practice.

Shortlisted applicants will be provided feedback and invited to a meeting with NZ On Air to discuss their full proposal application.

Select projects funded through this initiative will also be supported through NZ On Air's media agency partnership with Contagion. Projects are encouraged to apply for up to a maximum of \$50,000 to cover expenses related to marketing, publicity production, and the creation of assets. For detailed guidance on this process, please contact our Audience and Media Strategist, Sarah Donaldson on sarah@nzonair.govt.nz. For guidance on possible scope and eligibility of marketing costs to include in your budget, please review our [Marketing Budget Guidance](#) document.

You can view our recent producer session with Contagion here -

- [Tamariki & Rangatahi Producer Creative Workshop PowerPoint](#)
- [Tamariki & Rangatahi Producer Creative Workshop Video](#)

The Aotearoa Screen Publicists Collective also have some great resources to consider:

- [Aotearoa Screen Publicist website](#)
- [Publicity Planning Kit](#)
- [Unit Publicity Task Matrix/Checklist](#)

A limit of four production funding applications per lead producer or production company will be accepted for assessment. We want your best ideas.

As usual, funded projects will need a registered company attached that we can contract with. This is not a requirement at the application stage. If you need information on the process for starting a business, and the responsibilities that come with that, please check this [link here](#).

E. Platform Distribution

We anticipate funding content specifically for release through social media platforms. Therefore, the inclusion of a traditional local platform or local video on demand platform is not a mandatory requirement. However, we remain open to projects that have secondary backing from a local platform, provided there is a well-defined distribution strategy outlining how they will support the primary social media rollout to build and cultivate audiences across all intended platforms.

To ensure the team has the support of experienced editorial oversight in lieu of a local commissioning platform, NZ On Air will require all projects to have an Executive or senior producer attached and adequately budgeted for as part of this initiative. If applicants do not have an established producer within the team, NZ On Air will work with shortlisted applicants to partner EPs to final proposals where appropriate. If applicants have existing relationships, we welcome the early attachment of EPs at the initial pitch stage. Early attachment of an EP will not sway decision making over a strong idea!

In light of increasing concerns regarding content safety and the well-being of content creators on TikTok, we have decided not to focus on funding content exclusively for this platform. Instead, we encourage content creators to conceive their projects with a horizontal release strategy,

encompassing a variety of social media platforms, including TikTok. However, TikTok should not be your primary distribution channel for the content.

We require New Zealand audience viewership and engagement data to be obtainable from all content distribution platforms and shared with us throughout the release, upon completion of the project and at regular intervals following.

The project cannot be:

- a video game, or Virtual Reality (and other Extended Reality) project
- an e-book or interactive book
- a podcast or audio only project; we will accept applications for content that have audio elements supporting a primary video outcome I.e. a Vidcast
- a digital/online extension to a film or TV programme
- content made primarily for internal training purposes.

F. Timeline

5 October, 2023	Two-page pitch round opens All applications must be made through NZ On Air’s online application system. Applications not submitted through this system will not be accepted. You must submit a request to register with our online system well in advance of the application deadline day.
4pm, 26 October, 2023	Two-page pitch application deadline
30 November, 2023	Shortlisted Applicants Notified This date may be extended at NZ On Air’s sole discretion.
4th of December - 22nd of December	NZ On Air to hold feedback sessions with shortlisted applicants, and where necessary partner with EPs/senior producers to support the development of their full proposals.
18th of January, 2024	NZ On Air Round Toru Opens
4pm, 8th of February, 2024	Submission deadline for Round Toru
12th of April, 2024	Decisions for Round Toru Applicants notified following day. This date may be extended at NZ On Air’s sole discretion

G. Useful resources

[Where Are The Youth Audiences \(2022\)](#)

[Where Are The Audiences 2023](#)

[NZ On Air Youth Strategy](#)

CASE STUDY: [INKY PINKY PONKY](#)



This project exemplifies the principles of social-first, algorithm-busting public media content, driven by four pivotal success factors:

AUTHENTIC: The project is spearheaded by a team that embodies authenticity, ensuring that the content resonates genuinely with the intended audience.

SPECIFIC: The content is tailored to address specific themes and perspectives, including those of the Tongan, Trans, Pasifika, LGBTIQ+ communities, fostering a deep connection with these audiences.

RELATABLE: Grounded in universal

truths, the content provides an emotional and relatable youth experience that audiences can invest in, regardless of their backgrounds or identities.

ACCESSIBLE: The content is readily available in the places and spaces where its target audience typically discovers and consumes content, ensuring easy access. The cross-platform release strategy worked across Whakaata Māori, Coconet TV and Fresh social media platforms and channels.

Whakaata Māori	30,360 online video views 14,000 linear views	Facebook	Reach: 111k Reactions: 1,731 Comments: 141 Shares: 126
YouTube	1.1 million views 37% Local Video Views Likes: 28k Comments: 1,506	Instagram	Reach: 702k views Likes: 69k Comments: 867 Shares: 10k
TikTok	Views: 1.8 million views Likes: 237k Comments: 2329 Shares: 27k		

H. Contacts

Queries around the submission of applications through NZ On Air’s online application system should be directed to thomas@nzonair.govt.nz or our funding team via funding@nzonair.govt.nz .

I. Reserved Rights and Terms and Conditions

The following government standard terms and conditions apply to the RFP and the RFP process:

- a. you must bear all of your own costs in preparing and submitting your proposal
- b. you represent and warrant that all information provided to us is complete and accurate
- c. we may rely upon all statements made in your proposal
- d. we may amend, suspend, cancel and/or re-issue the RFP at any time
- e. we may change the RFP (including dates), but will give all submitters a reasonable time to respond to any change
- f. we may accept late proposals and waive any irregularities or informalities in the RFP process
- g. we may seek clarification of any proposal and meet with any submitter(s)
- h. we are not bound to accept the lowest priced conforming proposal(s), or any proposal
- i. if none of the proposals are acceptable to us we may enter into negotiations with one or more of the submitters (if any).
- j. we both agree to take reasonable steps to protect the other's confidential information
- k. our obligation to protect your confidential information is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 and other legal, parliamentary and constitutional conventions
- l. there is no binding legal relationship between us, and your proposal is only accepted if we both sign a funding contract
- m. our Request for Proposals (RFP) comprises this document, and any subsequent information we provide to suppliers
- n. the laws of New Zealand shall govern the RFP process
- o. in submitting your proposal you are deemed to have read, understood and agree to be bound by these terms and conditions.