



PIJ Summit 2021

Purpose

On 9 June 2021 NZ On Air hosted a summit in Auckland and via Zoom to discuss the newly launched Public Interest Journalism fund with interested parties, provide feedback on the first round, and provide some guidance for future funding applicants. This document is a high-level summary of the day. Where there are presentation slides or published reports available these have been linked in the relevant places.

Introduction

The day was divided into two parts, with the morning session pitched at general news journalism, and the afternoon focused on Māori and iwi journalism. All attendees were invited to join both sessions. It was attended in person by 50 people and via Zoom by circa 70 people across the day. The sessions were facilitated by NZ On Air's Head of Journalism, Raewyn Rasch.

Summary – General session

Introduction and summary of the initial funding round

Presented by Raewyn Rasch

Raewyn began with a summary of the first round of applications: 123 applications for proposals totaling \$48,222,416 - with \$9.6M available in this first round. In this two stage process 42 applications were asked to submit full proposals and 41 proposals were submitted by the deadline. The assessment process for those applications is underway.

This round did not include role-based funding so a number of applications that involved hiring full-time reporting staff will be prompted to re-apply to the next round where we will be accepting role-based applications.

This round did cover Industry Development (comprising training schemes, and small-scale innovation initiatives). Among these were 16 applications for training schemes.

While the fund received a variety of project applications, Raewyn noted that measuring the application subject matter against important issues facing Aotearoa provided some interesting results. There were no applications dealing with the housing crisis or education and only a few applications in the areas of crime and justice, healthcare, COVID-19, poverty/inequality, the economy, arts, local

government, and race relations, and only one in-house training programme re Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Opportunities missed in the first-round applications

Presented by Gavin Ellis – media consultant and one of the external assessors of funding applications

Gavin noted that assessors were pleased to see some investigative journalism applications with some excellent ideas. They were also pleased to see an ambitious approach from Māori, Pasifika and ethnic media.

He outlined what he saw as some ‘missed opportunities’:

- Co-operation – There were several applications seeking funding for youth news services that were similar. To fund each would risk duplication and fragmentation. Gavin observed that many seemed to view cooperation as something to be done on a ‘least harm’ basis. He felt while this was a natural point of view, it was inhibiting the industry and potentially denying outlets access to funding. He noted the lack of an industry-wide approach. He stated he was *“left with the impression that attitudes to competition in NZ are outmoded.”* He implored the attendees to *“Think as an industry and not as competitors.”*
- Courts, local government, statutory bodies – Gavin believes these are all areas that are lacking but only one application was directed at this ‘baseline journalism’. Applications were pitched at high-end (investigative) or at cadet schemes to swell bottom ranks. He implored that the PIJF is an opportunity to *“subsidise work you should do but can no longer afford to do.”*

Gavin closed by challenging the industry to seize the opportunity. He promoted the idea that a broader summit on journalism and democracy was called for.

Te Tiriti education

Presented by Raewyn Rasch

Raewyn opened this session with an impassioned plea for media organisations to embrace the need for more Te Tiriti o Waitangi education. *“There is a wealth of research and evidence that shows media bias is present throughout our industry and if Stuff’s example is anything to go by – all media could do with a bit of introspection.”* Raewyn stated that despite the PIJF guidelines explicitly stating the fund could be used to support Te Tiriti education for newsrooms there was only one application for this.

“I believe if we could encourage our media to better understand how our nation actually came to be, and how tangata whenua and tauwiwi could step forward in partnership, the transformation within Aotearoa would be incredible.”

Partnership Editors

Presented by Stacey Morrison and Mihingarangi Forbes

These leading broadcasters presented an opportunity to create new roles to sit alongside editors and bring a kaupapa Māori framework to newsrooms and to stories from the outset. Their presentation is [included here](#).

Working as the Aotearoa Media Collective (AMC) they propose a process to work with individual organisations to identify strengths and weaknesses and help to create a bespoke role description for a Partnership Editor for that organisation. They noted the existence of Partnership Editors could also lead to better support and care for diverse cadets/interns, as these people would be learning and operating in a culturally safe environment.

NZ On Air will work with AMC to refine this consultancy mahi and update the sector accordingly on how applicants can approach AMC to develop their own tailored plan for a Partnerships Editor for their newsroom. We expect to open a future PIJF round for Partnerships Editor funding submissions.

Overview of Industry Development applications and opportunities within training and cadetships

Presented by Raewyn Rasch

One of the big issues facing our sector is around rebuilding the number of journalists and improving their training. Consultant Hal Crawford was engaged to do a report for NZ On Air on Journalism Education Training and he spoke to a variety of people both in the industry and education sector. What he found was –

- Industry and the education sector should be more connected
- Student demand for journalism education has declined steeply
- There is an undersupply of acceptable candidates for journalism jobs
- There is an undersupply of journalists and journalism students from Māori, Pacific, Asian and other diverse backgrounds.

The PIJF had 16 applications in the first round for training programmes and a couple of others were embedded in Project proposals – most of those proposals were for cadetships/mentoring programmes or versions of on-the-job training.

10 training applications were selected through to full proposal assessment due to their focus on underrepresented groups, their collaborative nature, or their cost-effectiveness. This could provide training for around 57 new journalists and professional development and upskilling for around 550.

That leaves us with five multi-million-dollar schemes. And it was a case of great minds think alike – many were similar and to fund them all would have seen duplication on a national scale. But there are bigger issues at stake. The industry obviously sees the need for more on-the-job training.

This is not something the PIJF was set up to sort out, nor can we in three years. We are also cognisant that funding large scale cadetships would completely undermine the journalism education sector only to have those schemes possibly dry up once the PIJF tap is turned off, putting the sector in more peril.

Long-time journalism trainer and one of the external assessors Jim Tucker has suggested that we consider appointing training development managers for each large scheme and form a joint national plan for in-house training.

We are looking for innovative solutions and lowering competitive tensions. We need to collaborate with the education sector and with newsrooms and experienced journalists. We may end up having to issue an RFP (request for proposals) and choose just one scheme if the industry isn't able to collaborate.

Such innovative thinking led the BBC to develop what's called the Share Data Unit to develop journalists in the fast growing area of data journalism. We asked Hal Crawford to take a look at a BBC model and he thinks a New Zealand version is possible.

Shared Data Unit (SDU)

Presented by media consultant Hal Crawford

Hal outlined the scheme which is run by the BBC as part of its Local News Partnership programme. His presentation is included [here](#).

Essentially four students (working journalists) spend 12 weeks partnered with a full-time trainer – and end as fully-fledged data journalists. All the output of the unit is shared with news partners.

In terms of results: The output sees story packs created by the trainee data journalists that are available to partners in the scheme. Journalists at these partner outlets can take the pack and create their own stories from it. Output in terms of the graduates of the SDU – 50% of people who've done it go on to become dedicated data journalists.

Hal sees the PIJF as an opportunity to create a SDU here He posed questions to consider including:

- Where would it be based?
- What would the balance be between physical and remote learning?

- Who are the best data journalists in NZ?
- How do we get these people to teach at the NZ SDU?
- Who is eligible to take the course?
- And how long should the course be?

Looking forward to the July round and how to maximise funding opportunities on offer

Presented by Raewyn Rasch

Round 2 of the PIJF will open on the 1st of July. We will take on board the outcomes of this first round and feedback from the sector to craft the criteria as quickly as possible but in general there are things that will strengthen your proposals.

PIJF is not:

- BAU – it's not what you already do. We want to fund what you can't do now.
 - Business continuity funding will only be considered where there is a demonstrated risk that the journalism will not continue without PIJF.
- New media businesses or start-ups.
- Content that could be funded elsewhere (e.g. docos that could apply for NZ On Air general Factual funding). There's no clear line on this – let's talk if you have a prop that could sit in either the general Factual fund or the PIJF.
- Opinion pieces, profile pieces.
- Industry/trade publications with focused audiences and focused content.

The PIJF is for:

- Projects that have been in the too-hard basket due to lack of funding
- Areas where coverage has reduced – e.g. courts, arts...
- At-risk, rare, endangered journalism.
- Must-have journalism (as opposed to 'nice-to-have".)

Role-based funding

What we'd like to see in the next round for role-based funding:

- Applications for reporting roles that support coverage of under-reported PIJ areas
- Coverage of areas of the country with reduced reporter numbers where there is demonstrable need for coverage
- Roles that increase diversity within an organisation, with a specific focus on Māori reporting
 - People have been asking the difference between **Project-funding vs. Role-based** funding. We think of **Projects** as more likely to encompass multiple roles (some part-time, some full-time) producing content with a defined output and time-frame. **Role-based** funding is more likely to

be one reporting role covering a defined subject matter/geographic region that is 'at-risk'.

- Once again, role-based funding will be considered where there is demonstrated risk that the coverage or role is unsustainable without PIJF

The other two factors important in an application to the PIJF will be:

- **Sustainability** - how will this role or project survive once the PIJF funding is completed? How might you demonstrate 'skin-in-the-game' and continuation of the mahi beyond the PIJF?

and

- **Collaboration** - demonstrations of collaboration that ensure content funded by the PIJF reaches maximum audiences and provides enhanced value for taxpayer money.

In terms of collaboration we do have an excellent model in the Local Democracy Reporting (LDR) initiative and that will be seeking funding in the next Jul/Sep round. We see opportunity for the LDR to be expanded and so if you are interested in a local government reporter for your team you should talk to the LDR manager Nina Fowler (nina.fowler@rnz.co.nz). Their call for expressions of interest this year has closed but they may be open to discussing options in terms of future PIJF funding rounds.

Next steps

- Full proposal assessments are underway.
- Application outcomes will be announced after **29 June** for those seeking under \$1m, and after **15 July** for those seeking over \$1m.
- The July round will open on **1 July** with the deadline for 5-page proposals on **22 July**.
- The third round will open on **9 September** with the deadline **30 September**.

This hui is the first of a number we will facilitate to continue conversations with the sector on how best to utilise the fund.

We also see the need for the sector to come together to engage, network and look for solutions and we will look to host a sector conference later in the financial year.

Afternoon session for Māori media

Overview of Māori engagement with the PIJF

Presented by Raewyn Rasch

Of the 129 applications in the first round around 22 were for Māori focused projects or industry development.

42 applications were asked to submit full proposals and 39 proposals were submitted by the deadline last Thursday. Of these 11 were Māori-focused applications.

The assessors were impressed by the quality of the Māori applications especially in the training area.

There were 16 applications for training programmes and a couple of others embedded in Project proposals – most of those proposals were for cadetships/mentoring programmes or versions of on-the-job training.

We have taken 10 training applications to the final round due to their focus on specialty groups, their collaborative nature, small size or cost effectiveness. This could provide training for around 57 new journalists and professional development and upskilling for 550.

Two of those proposals are for large scale Māori journalist training that have the potential to create 25 new reporters and upskill a further 100.

Of the remaining five multi-million dollar training applications – one of which is Māori - we will be trying to facilitate further discussion with the industry and the journalism education sector to look for collaborative and cost effective solutions.

This round did not include role-based funding so a number of initial applications that involved hiring staff will be prompted to re-apply to the next round where we will consider role-based applications.

There were five applications for youth networks, including one Māori application, and like the training schemes we will look to find some collaboration going into the next round.

How does Te Māngai Pāho (TMP) work with the PIJF

Presented by Blake Ihimaera, Head of Content at Te Māngai Pāho (TMP)

TMP funds content that promotes Te Reo Māori and Māori culture and is a bastion for Māori journalism. The agency has a very collegial relationship with NZ On Air – sitting alongside them to strategise on how the PIJF is allocated.

TMP's job is to make sure it is a safe space for Māori. The agency has facilitated hui and has sat alongside NZ On Air in creating the fund's general guidelines. The agency is proud of its achievements in seeing commitment to Te Tiriti included as a key criterion, and in Raewyn's appointment as Head of Journalism, and in working alongside Te Amokura Consultants on the Māori and Iwi Journalism stakeholder report.

Te Amokura consultants Māori sector stakeholder report

Presented by Te Wehi Wright of Te Amokura Consultants

Earlier this year NZ On Air engaged Te Amokura Consultants to carry out engagement with the Māori Media sector regarding the PIJF. Te Wehi Wright expressed his gratitude that the sector was open to gifting korēro. He presented the key findings, which can be read in the [full report here](#).

Raewyn Rasch responded that NZ On Air has tried to take on board as many of the recommendations as it can at this stage. But she was clear that it's not the end, there will be ongoing engagement.

"We cannot make up for years of neglect with one fund – but you have my assurance that we will do our best and our bit along side the larger Māori media shift that is also underway."

NZ On Air has also published its response (to date) to the Te Amokura report recommendations [here](#).

Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi

Presented by Whetu Fala and Bernie O'Donnel

Whetu presented iwi radio's new strategic plan and made a plea for ring-fenced funding.

Bernie added that *"This is the change we've been waiting a long time for."* He said the challenge would be to get a fractured sector to work together. He said NZ On Air has *"shown us a new way"*. He said Māori needed to encourage rangatahi into journalism and the sector needed to come together.

Kawe te Rongo

Presented by Leonie Hayden and Mihingarangi Forbes

The pair presented on their current efforts to re-establish a collective of Māori Journalists.

The idea to reinstate a collective had been around for a while (it had been disbanded in 2002). In February a hui voted to establish such a group. Around 90 people have signed up so far (this includes some comms people). Ngā Aho Whakaari is supporting the kaupapa.

Their goals are to provide peer support for each other, support training and development, and undertake advocacy and lobbying on an industry level. In future they would like a seat on Te Matawai. They would look to hold an AGM soon.

They had mobilised quickly once Te Amokura began looking for Māori journalist voices for their consultation. *“It was gratifying to see a lot of the stuff we fought for in the guidelines.”*

Leonie and Mihingarangi said that they would soon be asking employers for funding to support the association and would need to form a mandate. For now the best way to find them is their Facebook page - Māori Journalists Aotearoa.

Looking forward to the second round and how to maximise funding opportunities on offer for Te Reo Māori and Māori Journalism

A guide for those thinking about applying to Round 2.

Some learnings from the first round:

- The PIJF is not for BAU generally – but for Māori BAU is often at-risk – but applications must demonstrate that your BAU is at-risk.
- Also not for content that could generally be funded via other funds (including documentary/factual content that NZ On Air would fund in its general rounds – worth talking to one of the team about your project specifically in advance of a funding round if you’re not sure where it sits)
- Profile pieces in general media will not be supported – but in Māori media profiles can be important – the telling of success stories is important – and also to Pacific journalism.
- Industry-trade publications are not a priority.

What we would like to see are:

- Journalism content that has been put into the ‘too hard’ basket due to limits on resourcing or funding
- Content that delves into the core issues facing our country
- Content that meets the highest journalistic standards of fairness and balance, holding power to account, reflecting and representing all elements of society, advocating for and on behalf of the public interest.
- Projects where coverage has reduced such as court reporting, local government reporting, arts reporting.

Role-based funding in next round

- We would like to see applications for reporting roles that support coverage of under reported PIJ areas
- Coverage of areas of the country with reduced reporter numbers
- People have been asking the difference between Project-funding vs. Role-based funding. We think of Projects as more likely to be multiple roles (some part-time, some full-time) producing content with a defined output and time-

frame. Role-based funding is more likely to be one reporting role covering a defined subject matter/geographic region that is 'at-risk'

- Once again role-based funding will be considered where there is demonstrated risk of a PIJ role not being sustainable without funding.
- Collaboration

[ends]