

NEW MUSIC PROJECT FUNDING

Pre-Application Criteria Guidelines

Updated December 2025



Introduction

NZ On Air's *New Music Project* funding scheme supports the production and promotion of new New Zealand music and is designed for artists who have an established track record of significant audience and broadcast/online outcomes in New Zealand. It is not designed for new or emerging artists without significant results in these areas.

If you are a less experienced artist, we have the *New Music Single* scheme – this is for artists that can achieve at least 10 of the 30 criteria you can see [here](#).

If you are a children's artist, you can apply for [New Music Project Kids](#)

We also have *New Music Kids*, *New Music Pasifika* and *New Music Pan-Asian* funding. These are single funding focus rounds for Children's music artists, as well as artists who identify as Pasifika or Pan-Asian. There is also *Waiata Takitahi*, a co-fund collaboration alongside Te Māngai Pāho, which is for songs with at least 25% te reo Māori in the song lyrics.

New Music Project

New Music Project is funding to create, record, release and promote a multi-song project, with a minimum of five songs (not including intro, outros or interludes). For *New Music Project* applications, you must have a demonstrable and significant track record with audiences on broadcast and online media in New Zealand. This is a key part of the criteria for project applications.

It is mandatory that *New Music Project* applicants must have a **project manager and a third-party New Zealand-based music company** involvement alongside the project.

It is expected that the applicant has a funding history with NZ On Air i.e. the applicant has received Single or focus round funding before.

What you can expect

As is our experience, it is inevitable that demand for funds will outstrip our funding budgets, so not all applications will be successful in receiving funding.

Please note, our maximum contribution is \$50,000 plus the 10% Artist Creation Fee per project. If you have been previously funded through the New Music Single scheme for a track on this project, or received any other NZ On Air Music Funding within 12 months of the application closing date, then this should be deducted from the \$50,000.

Applicants cannot have any other NZ On Air Music grants open at the time of applying for a New Music Project grant.

For NMP funding, an artist must only apply under one entity (either as a solo artist or as part of a group/band) within a 12-month period. The maximum funding an artist can receive in 12 months is three New Music Single or Focus grants, or one New Music Project grant.

An artist can only apply twice for funding with the same song or project.

Criteria Check List

Set out in this document is a list of pre-application criteria you **must** meet before making an Expression of Interest about *New Music Project* funding.

These include:

1. Confirmation of New Zealand music
2. Third-party NZ-based music company and project manager involvement
3. Audience engagement
4. Artist track record – online & broadcast
5. Sending an Expression of Interest (EOI)

1. Confirmation of New Zealand Music

Your music must first qualify as New Zealand music. This means that it was created by, or the predominant creatives involved are, Citizens or Permanent Residents of New Zealand. If you are unsure if your music qualifies, please read [this document](#)

2. A project manager and a third-party New Zealand-based music company involvement with your Project is mandatory.

New Music Project applications must have a Project Manager attached. This person will be responsible for leading the project planning and roll out, and will take responsibility for its delivery. The Project Manager must have experience with music releases in Aotearoa New Zealand. NZ On Air will require evidence of project management experience.

Examples of a Project Manager are:

- Artist or band management
- Artist or band record label
- Independently contracted experienced project manager
- Contracted music publicity company with experience in project management
- A member of the band or an artist who has experience in project management

New Music Project applications must have a third-party New Zealand-based professional music company attached. This may be an independent or major record label, music distributor, music management company or specialist experienced music publicity company. This company must be committed to assisting with the project's planning and release roll out. The company must have experience with music releases in Aotearoa New Zealand and must be a genuine third-party (i.e. not the artist themselves or a related party to the artist).

The project manager and third-party company can be the same company or two different companies. NZ On Air must approve both the project manager and the third-party company before the *New Music Project* application is submitted.

A letter of support and confirmation of the level of involvement in the project from the nominated project manager and third-party company or companies, is required within the application. The letter must explicitly state that they are the third-party company or project manager.

3. Audience Engagement

Much like the criteria for the *New Music Single* funding scheme, it is expected that *New Music Project* applicants demonstrate significant audience engagement across broadcast and music streaming platforms, social media and live performance (where applicable).

Audience engagement indicates that there is interest and market demand for the applicant's music. This will vary across genres, but **5,000 followers/fans** on any such site should be considered as a minimum threshold for eligibility.

4. Artist Track Record – Online and Broadcast

Applicants for Project funding must have had at least one single (preferably more than one) achieve significant online traction. Different genres and audiences are taken into consideration, but generally we would expect one or more of their original songs to have achieved well **over 100,000 streams/plays online**. In the case of collaboration singles with other artists, the applicant must be the main feature artist on the song.

In radio terms, this means a song or songs that have achieved rotate airplay on a commercial or alternative radio station or network generating multiple plays, not one-off 'spot plays'.

5. Sending an Expression of Interest (EOI)

If you, or the artist you are working with, can satisfy the outlined minimum criteria and have a multi-single project in the planning, you may email an Expression of Interest to project@nzonair.govt.nz to find out more about the *New Music Project* application process.

This must be done at least two weeks from the next project application deadline. Your email must include the artist's name, details of the supporting Project Manager and third-party NZ-based music company, and a very brief overview of the proposed project.