



New Music SINGLE Criteria & Guidelines



Introduction

New Music Single application criteria are put in place to ensure that when you're applying for public funding you have first made some positive inroads into audience engagement and gaining a genuine interest in and following for your music.

There is huge demand for New Music Single funding (often receiving over 200+ applications each round) and it's important that the artists submitting songs that go through to our expert assessment panels have made some audience impacts already without funding support.

NZ On Air's mandate is to support a range of quality New Zealand music to be made available and discoverable across multiple online and broadcast platforms where a variety of New Zealand audiences listen to, discover and enjoy music. Hence your online following, streams, radio spins, views, plays and other engagement are core focuses of the work that we do and the music that we support.

New Music Single FAQ

Before you contact us, please read the Frequently Asked Questions to see if any of your questions are answered there.

Click here to read the [New Music Single FAQ](#).

If you have any other music funding queries, you can reach us at:
musicteam@nzonair.govt.nz

Before You Apply

Before you submit a song for *New Music Single* funding, you will need to ensure that your music qualifies as '[New Zealand Music](#)'. You can find information on this criteria [here](#).

You will also need to check to see if you meet our guidelines for applying. You can find the guidelines checklist on page 2 of this document.

To be eligible to apply for *New Music Single* funding we ask that you have reached **at least 10 out of these 30 criteria** benchmarks for your music to date. If you can reach at least 10 out of these 30 benchmarks then your song and application can be submitted to be assessed by our expert funding panels.

If this is your first time submitting an application within the NZ On Air *New Music Single* portal, you will just need to sign up first with your details, an email and password.

All applications can be submitted at our [New Music Single website](#), or type into your browser newmusicsingles.nzonair.govt.nz

Music Funding Guidelines Checklist

Here are some guidelines to check before applying for any of our funding initiatives, and they may affect the outcome of your application if you answer 'YES' to any of the questions below.

- ☐ We do not accept songs which have already been released and are publicly available*. Has your song already been released on a DSP or platform?
- ☐ An artist applicant may only receive three grants within 12 months and receive no more than \$55,000 in the same 12-month period. Have you received three NZ On Air Music funding grants or more than \$55,000 worth of funding within 12 months?
- ☐ We do not allow the same song to be considered in more than two different assessment rounds. Have you applied with the same song twice?
- ☐ We can only accept one song per artist per round for consideration. Do you have more than one song in the funding round you are applying in?
- ☐ If you have samples in your song, you confirm that you hold the intellectual property rights for all elements of your song, including clearance of any samples used. Do you have any uncleared samples in your song?
- ☐ We do not accept remixes, remakes or covers of songs for Music Funding. Is your song a remix, remake or cover?
- ☐ The artist applicant can only have one *New Music Single* (including Focus rounds i.e. *New Music Pasifika*, *New Music Pan-Asian*, *New Music Kids*, *Waiata Takitahi*) open at the time of applying and Zero *New Music Project* funding open. Do you have any NZ On Air Music funding grants open at the time of applying?

If you have any queries about these guidelines, please contact us at musicteam@nzonair.govt.nz

* e.g., 'Publicly available' meaning if you have released the track through a DSP ('Digital Service Provider') or platform.

Key Criteria

Online Audience: 7 criteria points
Broadcast Track Record: 5 criteria points
Other Media/Platform Editorial: 4 criteria points
Live Performance Track Record: 6 criteria points
Business Time: 5 criteria points
Awards and Recognition: 3 criteria points

A total of 30 criteria points can be reached, however to qualify for *New Music Single* funding you will only need **10 of the 30 criteria**.

Strategic Plans & Supplementary Info

When applying for any NZ On Air Music funding, there are a few strategic plans and supplementary information which we encourage you to write about in your application to help support the assessors in making their decision.

These could be:

1. Outlining how you will reach New Zealand audiences online, on radio and on other media.
2. Outlining how NZ On Air funding will be used to improve the quality of your song and video content.
3. Naming the people you will be using to carry out the recording and production of your song. E.g. audio producer, engineer, mix engineer and studio you intend to use for this Single.
4. Naming the people you will be using to carry out the visual content production of your song. E.g. producer, director, production company, gear rental.
5. Outlining how you plan to promote and market your single e.g. working with a PR company to service your single release.
6. As of January 2025, all NZ On Air Music funding applications will require you to fill out an initial budget outlining your expected costs. This is to help us understand what you will be using the funding for, and allows applicants to budget their project prior to receiving funding.

Initial Budget for Application

As of January 2025, all *New Music Single* funding applications must include an initial budget outlining your expected costs. This is to help assessors understand what you will be using the funding for and allows applicants to budget their project prior to receiving funding.

The Application Budget Template can be found as an Excel spreadsheet or Google Sheet, which you can upload or link to in the *New Music Single* funding application.

You can find the online Google Sheets budget template [here](#).

Budget Costs

NZ On Air will reimburse eligible costs up to \$10,000 (+ GST if registered) per single only plus the additional 10% Artist Creation Fee of up to \$1,000 (+ GST if registered) only.

A mandatory 10% Artist Creation Fee amounting up to \$1,000 plus GST (if applicable), will be applied in addition to your grant and disbursed exclusively in the final Drawdown. This fee pertains to internal creative services provided to the project by the artist. Consequently, the New Music Single funding grant of \$10,000 will include an additional maximum payment of \$1,000 to the Contracting Party, resulting in a total funding amount of up to \$11,000.

Successful applicants are able to claim any eligible expenses from the funding round open date. You can find this date on our website [here](#), and it will also be stated in your Funding Agreement letter.

Assessment Process

This is a step-by-step breakdown of the Assessment Process for New Music Single and Focus Round music funding.

1. Once the round closes, all applications are checked by our Music Team against the criteria set out in the document.
2. After all applications have been confirmed to meet the entry criteria, the applications are sent to the assessment panel.
3. The assessment panel is made up of seven assessors – a representative from NZ On Air, a Commercial radio station, a Student Radio Network station and the remainder from the Music Industry (music media, music managers, music producers, music industry organisations etc).
4. Prior to the Assessment Hui, the assessors listen to and read all the applications and submit a list of Top 30 based on the Assessment Criteria.
5. At the Assessment Hui, each of the Top 30 songs are played and discussed, beginning with the applications with the most votes, until 30 singles are funded.
6. If an application is not successful, the applicant is welcome to contact the NZ On Air Music Team for feedback via musicteam@nzonair.govt.nz. Please note, there may be a delay in response after Funding Decisions are announced as we get an influx of feedback queries during this period.

NewMusic SINGLE Criteria

A detailed criteria on the 30 criteria benchmarks for your music to date.

If you can reach at least 10 out of these 30 benchmarks then your song and application can be submitted to be assessed by our expert funding panels.

2. Online Audience [7 criteria points]

Answers in this section must apply to the artistic entity you are currently applying for. You cannot use previous acts/bands/groups criteria in this section, nor can you be a “feat.” or featuring artist on the examples you provide, except for criteria 2.4.

- 2.1 You have had over 10,000 streams for any ONE song on any ONE Digital Service Provider (DSP).**
DSP examples may include audio streaming platforms such as: Spotify, Apple Music, Soundcloud, YouTube Music, Bandcamp, Tidal, etc.
- 2.2 You have had over 250,000 streams for any ONE song any ONE Digital Service Provider (DSP).**
If you have achieved this with one song, then you can use the same song for question 1 (10,000 streams) and 2 (250,000 streams).
- 2.3 You have had THREE songs stream over 20,000 each over the last two years on any ONE Digital Service Provider (DSP).**
This must be up an up-to-date figure i.e. within the two years from your funding application date.
- 2.4 You have collaborated as a feature on ONE song that has had over 10,000 streams on any ONE Digital Service Provider (DSP).**
The feature could include a vocal feature or producer feature. e.g. Artist A featuring Artist B. It must be a different song than used in Question 1 and we won't accept any writers or producers credited in the credits – must be the main listed artist of the song on the DSP.
- 2.5 You currently have at least 5,000 monthly listeners or 2,000 followers on Spotify.**
This must be up an up-to-date figure i.e. within the last two months from your funding application date.
- 2.6 You have had more than 5,000 plays for on any ONE music video or piece of video content for your music on any ONE streaming site/ platform.**
Video streaming site examples include YouTube, Vimeo, Vevo, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.
- 2.7 You have more than 2,000 online followers/subscribers on any ONE social media platform.**
Social media platform examples include Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, etc.

3. Broadcast Track Record [5 criteria points]

Answers in this section must apply to the artistic entity you are currently applying for. You cannot use previous acts/bands/groups criteria in this section, nor can you be a “feat.” or featuring artist on the examples you provide.

- 3.1 You have had a song playlisted on a New Zealand radio station.**
This must be a song which has been in regular multi-play rotation on the station (e.g. A-rotate, B-rotate, C-rotate etc.) - not one-off 'spot' plays. You can include NZ On Air-sponsored Music Features where your song was played on rotate multiple times in that feature.
- 3.2 You have had a song chart in one of the weekly Radioscope radio airplay charts.**
These charts include the Radioscope All Airplay Top 100, Pop Top 40, Rock Top 40, Alt Top 40, Urban Top 40, Dance Top 40, Adult Top 40, NZ Top 40, Te Reo Maori Top 20 or Most Added Top 40. You can search for this at <https://www.radioscope.co.nz/>
- 3.3 You have featured in the official nationwide SRN (Student Radio Network) Top 10 chart.**
You must have featured in the official nationwide SRN Top 10 or the Hit Picks which is published online weekly at <http://srn.nz/> or you can find it on the Student Radio Network social media [here](#).
- 3.4 You have featured on a live-to-air performance on a New Zealand platform.**
This can include a live-to-air performance on a radio station or network, or a live stream performance on a New Zealand-based platform. Please note this does not include your own livestream event via Facebook, Instagram, Twitch, Discord, etc.
- 3.5 You have been paid for the use of one of your songs (eg. through a sync).**
This is where you have been paid for the use of your music in a movie, TV show, advertisement, video content, etc. This does not include APRA AMCOS or your music distributor.

4. Other Media/Platform Editorial

[4 criteria points]

Answers in this section must apply to the artistic entity you are currently applying for. You cannot use previous acts/bands/groups criteria in this section, nor can you be a “feat.” or featuring artist on the examples you provide.

- 4.1 You have achieved a playlist placement on an official DSP-curated editorial playlist (e.g. curated by Spotify, Apple Music, etc).**
This must be official platform-curation (i.e. created and curated by Spotify, Apple Music or other DSP editors). This does not include algorithmic playlists such as Release Radar, Discover Weekly, Daily Mix, Radio; or NZ On Air Music playlist; or user/personal playlists.
- 4.2 You have featured in a New Zealand-based music/entertainment publication (online or print).**
This can include feature article and/or music video feature. NZ music/entertainment publication (online or print) examples may include NZ Musician, Rolling Stone AU/NZ, UnderTheRadar, 13th Floor, Elsewhere, Sniffers, The Spinoff, Stuff, NZ Herald, Coup de Main, Muzic.NZ, RNZ, etc.
- 4.3 You have featured in an overseas-based music/entertainment publication (online or print).**
This can include a feature article and/or music video feature. Overseas music/entertainment publication (online or print) examples may include: Complex, Happy Mag, Rolling Stone, Fader, NPR, Pitchfork, etc.
- 4.4 You have had a music video premiere on a significant New Zealand or international online music/entertainment platform/publication.**
This must be a specific video premiere which was exclusive to that platform for initial release. NZ or overseas-based music/entertainment online publication examples may include any of the examples in criteria #2 and #3 that are above.

5. Live Performance Track Record

[6 criteria points]

Answers in this section must apply to the artistic entity you are currently applying for. You cannot use previous acts/bands/groups criteria in this section, nor can you be a “feat.” or featuring artist on the examples you provide.

- 5.1 You have had more than 100 paying public attend any ONE show that you headlined.**
‘Headlined’ means that your act was the main performer at the event, not a support act.
- 5.2 You have completed a New Zealand tour of at least three centers, OR you have played at least five shows in the last 12 months.**
This must be up an up-to-date figure i.e. within the last 12 months from your funding application date.
- 5.3 You have completed an international headline tour of at least three cities.**
‘International headline tour’ means you have toured outside of New Zealand e.g. a tour of Australia which included Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.
- 5.4 You have supported a international touring act in New Zealand or overseas.**
‘International touring act’ means an artist that tours multiple overseas markets.
- 5.5 You have played a major music festival.**
A minimum attendance should be at least 2,000 at any music festival you reference in this question. Examples may include Rhythm & Vines/ Alps, Laneway Festival, Homegrown, Splore, Bay Dreams, Soundsplash, Cuba Dupa, Newtown Festival, etc. This does not include Wine and Food Festivals, Beer Festivals, etc.
- 5.6 You have showcased at an international or local music-focused trade fair.**
This could include SXSW, The Great Escape, WOMEX, Going Global, Big Sound, etc.

6. Business Time [5 criteria points]

Answers in this section must apply to the artistic entity you are currently applying for. You cannot use previous acts/bands/groups criteria in this section, nor can you be a “feat.” or featuring artist on the examples you provide.

6.1 You are signed to a third-party record label.

A third-party record label is company with track record of releasing new music in New Zealand that is not owned or operated by the artist applicant.

6.2 You have a third-party publishing deal.

A third-party publishing deal is an agreement with an organisation that has a track record of promoting compositions for commercial use e.g. film syncs and collecting licensing royalties on behalf of the composers. This could be part of a record label or an independent organisation but it cannot be owned or operated by the artist applicant. This does not include APRA AMCOS.

6.3 You have a third-party management deal.

A third-party management deal is an agreement with a company or individual artist manager with a track record of overseeing the business activities of musicians, producers and songwriters. The manager cannot be the artist applicant.

6.4 You have a third-party live booking agent.

A third-party booking agent is a company or individual with a track record of securing live performance bookings. The booking agent cannot be the artist applicant.

6.5 You have a distribution arrangement in place.

A distributor is a company that is responsible for selling music online and in stores, and includes distributing songs to streaming platforms. This could be part of a record label or an independent organisation operating in New Zealand, or an online service.

7. Awards and Recognition [3 criteria points]

Answers in this Awards and Recognition section can apply to any artistic entity you have been a significant part of.

7.1 You have been a finalist for a major nationwide music award.

Major nationwide music award examples may include any category in the Aotearoa Music Award, APRA Silver Scroll, Waiata Māori Music Awards, Pacific Music Awards, Taite Music Prize, SRN Award, Rolling Stone Award etc.

7.2 You have had a song, album or EP feature in the Recorded Music NZ Top 20 Album or Single or Hot charts.

These charts incorporate streaming, airplay and physical sales. You will need to state the song, chart type, position, month and year. <https://nztop40.co.nz/>

7.3 You have received a music grant/funding previously from another New Zealand public funding agency.

This may include funding from Creative NZ, NZ Music Commission, Te Māngai Pāho, Foundation North, etc. This criteria does not include any NZ On Air funding initiatives or NewTracks, and will not be applicable if you input that into this criteria example.