

WAIATA TAKITAHI FUNDING

Application Guidelines

Updated February 2026



E karanga ana ki ngā kaiwaiata, ngā kaipuoro me ngā kaipuoro ataata kia arotahi mai ki tēnei kaupapa o Waiata Takitahi!

This document sets out detailed requirements for artists intending to make an application to the NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho *Waiata Takitahi* round.

To read a brief overview on *Waiata Takitahi* funding, click [here](#).

To read our *Waiata Takitahi* Frequently Asked Question and eligibility criteria, click [here](#).

Introduction - What is Waiata Takitahi?

Waiata Takitahi – ('single song') – is a co-fund and collaboration between **NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho**. Launching in 2020, it was the first time the two funding agencies were able to join forces on a music funding initiative. The ambition for this fund is to enable brand new songs with strong te reo Māori lyrical content that have a good chance to connect with the audiences of New Zealand.

We are seeking applications from New Zealand artists who are interested in **recording and releasing a bilingual single** with potential general audience appeal and a **minimum of 25% te reo Māori in the song lyrics**. We are looking for songs which have the potential to connect with the audiences of New Zealand, as well as finding homes on broadcast platforms to encourage and support the use of te reo Māori in contemporary waiata.

Artists can come from any background, but the use of te reo Māori in the song will have to be supported by a language consultant (mātanga reo) to ensure correct usage, context and pronunciation. Having a language consultant confirmed by the application deadline is preferred as it is advantageous to your project, however all applicants will receive the same opportunity and assistance to recruit a suitable language consultant post-deadline, if their application is successful.

Successful recipients will be supported with professional music manager mentoring sessions through the Music Managers Forum with a focus on helping successful applicants achieve the best possible broadcast and online impact for their funded work.

Funding amount – up to \$14,000 (+ GST)

Waiata Takitahi grants will be available **up to \$14,000** (plus GST, if registered). There is also a \$1,000 mandatory Artist Creation Fee (ACF) which was introduced in January 2024, for internal creative services provided to the project by the artist. This brings the total *Waiata Takitahi* funding up to \$15,000.

The funding can be used towards a professional release-ready recording of the song, video content and other visual collateral to assist with the song release along with promotion, publicity and marketing. We also will expect that some of the funding will need to be utilised to engage a te reo

Māori consultant to ensure correct use of language and context in the final song (including a minimum of 25% te reo Māori).

NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho are both contributing pūtea to this fund.

There is no co-investment required by the artist/rights holder, however if additional investment is required to complete the project this will be the responsibility of the rights holder.

Guidelines for applying

- Funding of up to **\$15,000 (plus GST)** will be available, for a single with at least 25% te reo Māori in the song lyrics (up to \$14,000, plus up to \$1,000 Artist Creation Fee).
- Applicants must be **New Zealand Citizens or Permanent Residents**. Click [here](#) for more information on whether your music qualifies as New Zealand music.
- Primary broadcast and online outlets for this music would include any local radio stations, various streaming service playlists, video streaming sites, and the potential to cross to other playlists.
- Successful recipients can be supported with professional music manager mentoring/planning sessions through the Aotearoa Music Managers Forum with a focus on helping successful applicants achieve the best possible broadcast and online impact for their funded work.
- To be eligible to apply for *Waiata Takitahi* funding, we ask that you have reached **at least 5 out of 25 criteria benchmarks** for your music to date. If you can reach at least 5 out of these 25 benchmarks, then your single and application can be submitted to be assessed by our expert funding panels.
- You must also submit an initial budget on the provided Budget Template.
- The song **cannot already be released on any DSPs** if you are applying for *Waiata Takitahi* funding. If your song is already released online, we will decline your funding application.
- You can apply for funding for only the video content and promotion of a song, but the song cannot be released and publicly available*, and you will not be eligible for reimbursement of any of the recording costs associated with that song.
*e.g., 'Publicly available' meaning if you have released the song through a DSP ('Digital Service Provider') or platform.
- We can only accept **one song per artist per round** for consideration.
- No single artist can receive *New Music Single* funding more than three times within a 12-month period (including Focus Rounds i.e. *New Music Pasifika*, *New Music Pan-Asian*, *New Music Kids*, *Waiata Takitahi*, *excluding New Music Project Touring*), and no more than three times for any one album/EP release campaign. No *New Music Project* funded albums or EPs can receive additional *New Music*

Single or Focus Round funding, nor further funding above the \$55,000 cap. The applicant can have only one *New Music Single* (or Focus Round funding) application open at the time of applying and zero *New Music Project* funding applications open.

- If you have samples in your song, you must confirm that you hold the intellectual property rights for all elements of your song, including clearance of any samples used.
- We do not accept covers, remakes or remixes for *Waiata Takitahi* funding.

Submitting an application

Waiata Takitahi applications will ONLY be accepted online via the NZ On Air application website.

Go to <https://newmusicsingles.nzonair.govt.nz> to get this process started.

Please look for the specific *Waiata Takitahi* badge, then click and begin your application once the round opens.

If this is your first time submitting an application within the NZ On Air NewMusicSingle portal, you will need to register and login **ahead** of the deadline, so please do this in advance of applying.

To apply for funding for *Waiata Takitahi* you will need a recorded demo version of the song you are applying for funding for, and you will need to fill out the online application.

Initial Budget for Application

As of January 2025, all *Waiata Takitahi* 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 accurately budget the project prior to receiving funding.

The Application Budget Template can be found as an Excel spreadsheet or Google Sheets, which you can upload or link to in the *Waiata Takitahi* funding application

You can find the downloadable Excel budget template [here](#)

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

You can find the Budget Expectations for *Waiata Takitahi* funding [here](#)

Criteria for applying to Waiata Takitahi

The application process includes working your way through a list of 25 criteria options focused on your music journey and audience engagement to date.

Waiata Takitahi applicants will need to have achieved at least **5 of the 25 criteria** options to proceed to the song application stage.

The full list of criteria can be found [here](#).

Assessment criteria

Applications for Waiata Takitahi funding will be assessed by NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho and two to three external assessors based on the following criteria:

- Potential to assist with increasing levels of New Zealand music on radio
- Potential to impact online audiences with significant streams/views/shares/likes/sales
- Integration of te reo Māori in the waiata
- Track record of the artist
- Cultural value of the project for New Zealand audiences
- Strength of the overall application, plan and media targets
- Experience of the mātanga reo

The fine print

If your application is successful, alongside a number of other requirements we will stipulate that:

All collaborators (e.g. producers, videographers, photographers) are required to sign the *NZ On Air Safe Spaces Agreement* and adhere to the NZ On Air [Code of Conduct](#).

Producers must be aware of their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

Producers of video projects are required to:

- Follow the *Health and Safety in the New Zealand Screen Sector* guidelines found at <http://screensafe.co.nz>.
- Abide by agreed industry work standards as expressed in the [Individual Performance Agreement](#) (SPADA and NZ Actors Equity) and [The Blue Book](#) (NZ Film and Video Technicians Guild).
- Ensure the content is clearly branded as NZ On Air-funded. See our [accreditation requirements here](#).

The following standard terms and conditions apply to your application. In submitting your application, you are deemed to have read, understood and agree to be bound by these terms and conditions:

- you must bear all your own costs in preparing and submitting your application
- you represent and warrant that all information provided to us is complete and accurate
- we may rely upon all statements made in your application
- we may amend, suspend, cancel and/or re-issue these guidelines at any time
- we may waive any irregularities or informalities in the application process
- we may seek clarification of any proposal and meet with any applicant
- we will not seek clarification of all applications or meet with all applicants
- we are not bound to accept any application
- you will not submit in your application any data that breaches any third party right (including intellectual property rights and privacy rights) or is objectionable, incorrect or misleading
- we both agree to take reasonable steps to protect the other's confidential information
- our obligation to protect your confidential information is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 and other legal, parliamentary and constitutional conventions
- there is no binding legal relationship between us: a successful proposal is only formally accepted if we both sign a funding contract.