



Irirangi Te Motu
NZ On Air



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Reo Māori Content Co-Fund

RFP:

Wednesday, 13 August 2025

Open – Close:

Thursday 21 August 2025 – Thursday 11 September 2025

Decisions:

Friday 21 November 2025

Queries:

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or

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Hei Whakataki Introduction

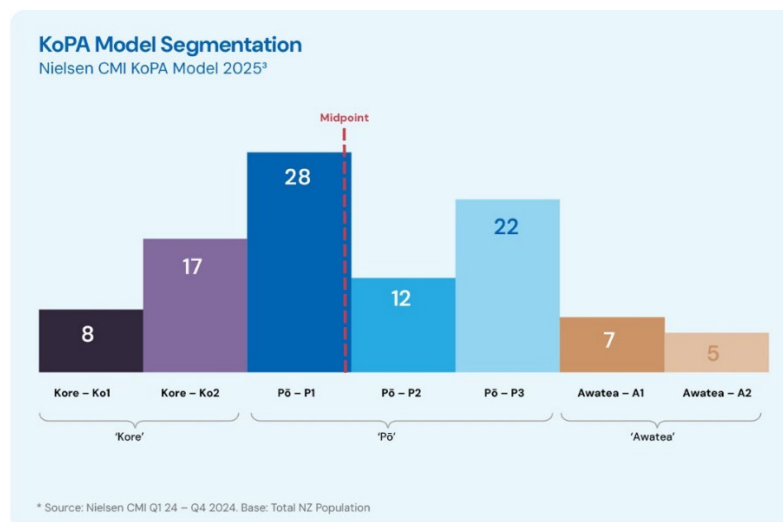
E te tai whakarunga, e te tai whakararo, pari mai ki te ākau o Irirangi te Motu, o Te Māngai Pāho. Tere mai i runga i ngā ngaru o whakapeto ngoi. Kia rite ai te reo ki te tai o te tahuna moana, ka ngunguru i te pō, ka ngunguru i te ao.

Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air are committed to supporting the Māori media sector and collectively improving the outcomes of the Maihi Karauna, the Crown's strategy for Māori language revitalisation. The Crown's strategy for Māori language revitalisation aims to achieve three audacious goals by 2040:

- **Goal 1:** 85% of New Zealanders will value te reo Māori as a key part of national identity.
- **Goal 2:** 1,000,000 New Zealanders will have the ability and confidence to talk about at least basic things in te reo Māori.
- **Goal 3:** 150,000 Māori aged 15 and over will use te reo Māori as much as English.

In support of these goals, Te Māngai Pāho measures New Zealanders' attitudes toward te reo Māori with the [KoPA model](#); an adaptation of the theoretical Zero–Passive–Active ZePA model developed by Prof. Rawinia Higgins and Dr Poia Rewi. Attitudes are segmented into three core categories: Kore (zero); Pō (passive) and Awatea (active). The goal is to 'right-shift' the population along the continuum, into Awatea.

When making investments into content, Te Māngai Pāho considers how the content may contribute toward the Crown's strategy goals and right-shifting of audiences.



As outlined in the Broadcasting Act 1989, NZ On Air has a statutory remit to promote Māori language and culture. [Te Pae Tata](#) is NZ On Air's [rautaki Māori](#), which outlines the agency's commitment to Māori content creators and audiences.

Te Pūtake Purpose

Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air are joining forces once again to fund high-quality, reo Māori screen content for a broad audience. The purpose of the co-fund is to support projects that neither agency can fund alone.

Research into the funding of Māori content has shown that most public funding for Māori film and television content goes toward factual production. [Audience research](#) tells us that Māori audiences appreciate comedy and drama. To address the funding imbalance and serve our audiences, in this co-fund we are looking to preference ambitious Scripted projects with scale. These may be projects that are looking to access the NZSPR (New Zealand Screen Production Rebate), to offset the ask of our agencies, or those that seek full funding. We will also accept applications for ambitious Non-Fiction projects with scale however, priority will be given to Scripted kaupapa.

Ambitious projects with scale should have high production values, well-crafted scripts or well researched ideas, that will stand out in the media marketplace. They will have strong platform support, including promotional budgets that aspire to attract a large local audience.

We will not accept applications seeking less than \$1m from this co-fund unless it is an NZSPR project that requires a lesser amount of gap financing.

For kaupapa that are looking to access the NZSPR, we aim to be 'last-in' funders, providing the final piece of the finance plan to ensure projects can proceed promptly. We will give preference to applications that include firm letters of offer that support the finance plan. Applications with gaps in their finance plan will be given lower priority.

The content we are looking to support is Aotearoa-centric, engaging, and compelling. It will also positively impact on New Zealanders' attitudes toward te reo Māori by giving the audience an experience of the language that is inclusive and within their reach.

Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air are prepared to allocate up to \$8m of funding but reserve at their sole discretion the right to distribute a greater or lesser amount in this funding round.

Te Kaupapa Matua Request for Proposals

Applications should demonstrate that the project is ready for production. Any successful project will need to meet a high bar for reo Māori, have strong platform attachment and demonstrate that it could not be produced without the support of this funding.

All content will be expected to demonstrate the capacity to deliver 30% or more te reo Māori. Projects must have an eligible, established local free-to-air (FTA) digital platform attached.

Eligible platforms include:

- Whakaata Māori, Māori+
- TVNZ 1, TVNZ 2, TVNZ+, Duke
- Three, ThreeNow
- Sky Open, SkyGo
- RNZ

Secondary platforms can be non-local, such as YouTube, but only in combination with a local FTA as a primary platform. If you are interested in applying with a different platform or platforms, please email nadia@tmp.govt.nz or funding@nzonair.govt.nz to check eligibility before you apply.

All successful projects need to be contracted by 30 June 2026. This means any third-party funding will need to be in place by then.

Applications for interactive content; radio and audio, including podcasts; platforms, games and apps will not be considered for funding in this round.

Scripted

Scripted funding is for drama or comedy projects that have scripts, a season outline, well-developed characters, and a compelling story. An attention-grabbing premise complemented by world class production values is the highest priority. Themes that convey a Māori worldview and that are supported by a high quality rautaki reo will stand out.

Your application should demonstrate that your project is ready to go into production. Any successful project will need to meet a high bar for reo Māori, have strong platform attachment, and demonstrate that it could not be produced without the support of this funding.

Scripted Development

Where applicants do not have a complete pilot script, season outline or character arcs, they may apply for funding to develop these for an application to a future co-fund or other funding round.

Projects that apply for Scripted Development funding should have the support of a primary platform. Platforms are not required to match-fund development but investment from the platform will strengthen an application. Your application should describe how you plan to use the development funding and demonstrate good insight into how additional development will get your project ready for production. Your Development application should articulate a clear approach to te reo Māori. Development funding received in this round does not guarantee production funding; it simply sets you up to make a more persuasive pitch to a future round. We expect to support a small number of projects for Scripted Development with up to \$30k per project.

Non-Fiction

Any Non-Fiction project funded in this round will need to have a high quality rautaki reo Māori, and strong platform attachment. We will prioritise projects that require significant research, tell a compelling story and demonstrate that it could not be produced without the support of this funding.

Music

Music is a valuable tool when telling stories on screen. We encourage all projects that are applying for funding to consider using waiata reo Māori and music from Aotearoa in their production. You should ensure that you allocate a realistic amount of pūtea in your budget for your music needs including music supervision, sync licensing, composition, performance, and recording. Music lines in your budget should be ringfenced and not used for other purposes.

We will not accept applications for sync licensing for projects that have previously received production funding.

Marketing & Promotion

The results of the [Where Are the Māori Audiences?](#) research reinforced the importance of marketing and promotion in order for local content to reach Māori audiences. We expect all applications to include budget lines for promotion and creation of marketing assets. Please include a marketing plan with your application. You should demonstrate how your content will reach its intended audience and how you will use the marketing pūtea in your budget to

do this. Marketing and promotion lines in your budget should be ringfenced and not used for other purposes.

Aromatawai Assessment Criteria

We expect this funding round to be heavily over-subscribed, with fewer than half of applications successful.

Applications will be considered by a panel of assessors as part of a contestable process. As well as being scored on their own strengths, applications will be considered against others to ensure that a range of projects are funded, with complementary audience outcomes. Factors that will be considered include how ready projects are to go into production, how different the project is from others recently funded – by each agency and by the co-fund, – and how strong the application is overall when compared with others received in the round.

Applicant & Key Personnel (20%)

- Production – capacity, experience, and success
- Capability – is this the right team to tell this story?
- Te reo Māori – evidence of commitment to te reo Māori
- Kaitiaki – appropriate to create content in te reo Māori

Creative (25%)

- Premise – fresh
- Synopsis – clear and captivating
- Treatment – will enhance creative proposition
- Māori worldview – story told from a Māori worldview or contains characters that carry a Māori worldview
- Audience – evidence of an existing audience or ability to leverage an audience; clear on the project's target audience

Te Reo Māori (20%)

- Rautaki reo – clear and strategic approach to delivering te reo Māori on screen
- Poutiaki reo – meaningful consultation from ideation to post
- Te reo Māori – genuine, natural use of the language
- Te reo Māori – craft – kia rekareka, kia auaha te whakamahinga o te reo!

Platform & Distribution (10%)

- Primary platform – committed, invested
- International distribution – interest, potential, committed

Promotion & Marketing (10%)

- Primary platform – marketing commitment and plan
- Other channels (incl. socials) – promotional potential

Budget (10%)

- Realistic and rationalised
- The budget and proposed language outcomes represent good value

Leverage (5%)

- Committed third-party funding already attached to project
- Can be further leveraged for the promotion of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori
- Capacity and capability building opportunities that uplift Māori creatives
- Potential to right-shift Kore and Pō audiences
- Overall balance of proposal – including whether the application has any weak areas, is unique and/or innovative

Wātaka Timeline

13 Aug 2025	RFP Published
21 Aug 2025	Applications Open
22 Aug 2025, 11:00am	Online Info Session https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84683429125
11 Sep 2025	Applications Close
21 Nov 2025	Decisions Notified
30 Jun 2026	Contracting Deadline

Te Tono ā-Ipurangi Applying Online

To apply, you must first register in Te Pūahatanga, the online application system operated by Te Māngai Pāho. Registrations can take up to three days to process so we encourage producers to register well in advance of the funding deadline. Applicants will not be able to submit applications until all required fields are completed. You can save your application at any time throughout the process and come back to edit right up to the deadline. Only applications submitted in Te Pūahatanga will be considered for funding.

Ngā Tikanga me Ngā Herenga Reserved Rights

- 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 or re-issue the RFP at any time.
- We may change the RFP (including dates) but will give all submitters a reasonable time to respond to any change.
- We may accept late applications with the approval of the Chief Executive of Te Māngai Pāho and the Head of Funding at NZ On Air.
- We may seek clarification of any proposal and meet with any applicant.
- We are not bound to accept the lowest priced conforming proposal(s), or any proposal.