

# MĀORI AND NZ ON AIR MUSIC FUNDING

KA KOROKĪ KA MARANGA |  
MĀORI MUSIC INDUSTRY COLLECTIVE, 2025



This review of Māori and NZ On Air Music Funding aims to present an overview of Māori artists working within the music industry of Aotearoa, and a lack of engagement and sense of distrust towards the traditional funding models that currently exist, as identified in Victoria Kelly's 2023 Review of NZ On Air Music Funding. Through hui and one to one interview, input from Māori working within the music industry was sought, including artists, producers, managers, and industry executives - with representation from those who do not whakapapa Māori but who work with and/or support Māori artists. Any quotes highlighted throughout this document have been anonymised.

Before we continue, Ka Korokī Ka Maranga | Māori Music Industry Collective extend their heartfelt thanks to the many who contributed their time and mātauranga to this review. To the musicians, producers, video directors, managers, and industry professionals who shared their personal experiences and insights — your generosity has enriched this work beyond measure. Your kōrero, lived experiences, and expertise have given us invaluable perspectives on the realities faced by Māori in Aotearoa's music industry. We are deeply grateful for your contributions, which have informed and shaped this work. Thank you for your willingness to share your journeys with us.

*- Sarah Owen, Author (Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Porou)*

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***I'm just trying to make something, you know, some quality art for people to enjoy.***

Māori musicians contribute a rich cultural heritage and unique perspectives to Aotearoa's vibrant music community. As highlighted in Victoria Kelly's 2023 review of NZ On Air's music funding model, significant progress has been made in integrating Māori culture within the industry. Successes such as the Waiata Anthems project, the establishment of Māori leadership roles within key industry bodies, and global partnerships, underscore the valuable work being done to uplift Māori music. However systemic challenges persist, creating a disconnect between policy intentions and real-world outcomes.

Kelly's review identified key barriers faced by Māori artists, including perceptions of NZ On Air as a Pākehā organisation, a lack of cultural understanding and leadership, and complex application processes. Cultural and economic pressures, distrust of authority, and barriers to entry exacerbate these challenges. Māori artists have also called for better representation on funding panels, business development support, and funding models that normalise the creation of Māori music rather than limiting it to targeted initiatives like songwriting camps. These findings highlight the need for tailored, culturally relevant support mechanisms to foster greater equity and inclusion.

This review acknowledges the gap between NZ On Air's efforts and the perceptions of the Māori music community, which stems from both systemic barriers and cultural differences. Addressing this disconnect requires an approach that prioritises cultural safety, representation, and accountability. Simplifying funding processes, offering targeted mentorship, and embedding Māori perspectives into decision-making frameworks are vital steps towards fostering meaningful engagement. Without these changes, the risk of perpetuating inequities and alienating Māori musicians from the opportunities intended to support them remains.

## MĀORI AND MUSIC IN CONTEXT



***Well, I'm a Māori, first and foremost. I'm an artist second, I feel. And my art reflects who I am.***

Māori music is a tapestry of tradition and innovation, deeply rooted in oral storytelling and tikanga Māori, while continually evolving to reflect contemporary expressions. This art form blends ancestral narratives with modern artistic styles, showcasing an enduring journey from ancient waiata tawhito to the incorporation of te reo Māori into genres like hip-hop, pop, and reggae. Central to Māori music is its dual role as both a vessel of cultural identity and a dynamic force for resilience and adaptation, shaped by history and colonisation.

Traditional Māori music transcends mere artistic expression—it preserves and transmits ancestral knowledge, values, and histories, forging connections across generations. The melodies and rhythms of waiata, alongside taonga puoro like the pūtātara and kōauau, embody the spiritual bond Māori share with the whenua, moana, and all living things. This musical heritage is steeped in concepts like whakapapa and manaakitanga, capturing Indigenous experiences of colonisation and cultural suppression while celebrating identity and pride.

Colonisation profoundly disrupted te ao Māori, suppressing language, cultural practices, and traditional performing arts. These upheavals interrupted the transmission of musical knowledge, reshaping Māori music as Western ideologies imposed new frameworks. Despite this, Māori have continually demonstrated resilience and adaptability. The fusion of traditional Māori elements with Western musical styles became a powerful form of resistance and cultural revitalisation. This evolution reflects not just survival but also a resurgence, where heritage and innovation intersect to create uniquely Māori expressions of modernity.



***I totally support the whole movement and the idea that we want our waiata out there in the world. Equally, I don't really care if it's in our reo or not, I just want our Māori artists out there in the world. Because whether you're singing in our reo or not, you're still Māori.***

In today's world, Māori music remains a vibrant medium for cultural preservation and revival. Contemporary artists skilfully blend traditional sounds with modern genres, using both te reo Māori and English to assert their mana motuhake and reclaim space in mainstream music. Music has become a platform for tackling social issues, celebrating heritage, and challenging misconceptions, amplifying Māori voices on national and global stages. For these artists, their work embodies the ongoing adaptation of their culture, using music to honour the past while addressing the complexities of the present.

At the heart of Māori music lies the community—a foundation of support that nurtures both identity and creativity. This collective strength provides artists with a sense of belonging and emotional resilience, essential for navigating the challenges of the music industry. Informal mentorships between seasoned musicians and emerging talents foster growth and ensure the continuation of cultural knowledge.

— “ —  
***We're so awesome. And all so supportive of each other.***

The influence of colonisation persists, shaping how Māori artists engage with the music industry and their audiences. Systemic inequalities and historical injustices have necessitated culturally inclusive approaches and platforms that uplift Indigenous voices. The blending of taonga puoro and kapa haka with contemporary production techniques underscores the adaptability of Māori music, turning it into a story of resilience, cultural pride, and self-determination.

Māori music is more than entertainment—it is a testament to the strength and continuity of cultural identity. Whether expressed in te reo Māori, te reo Pākehā, or a fusion of both, it remains a dynamic and innovative force, ensuring the heritage of Aotearoa thrives in an interconnected world.

— “ —  
***Community, for me, especially in the music scene, is probably the most important to me...it wouldn't be possible without my peers.***

# THE MUSIC FUNDING LANDSCAPE IN AOTEAROA - NZ ON AIR

The landscape of music funding in Aotearoa is, by its own characterisation, a diverse network of opportunities with a stated commitment to cultural inclusivity. The overarching intention is to provide resources that support artists from all backgrounds and genre to succeed and innovate, contributing to a dynamic and evolving music industry. Central to this framework are key funders like NZ On Air, Creative New Zealand (through their Arts Grants programme), and Te Māngai Pāho, which specifically supports reo Māori music.

## NZ ON AIR - ITS FUNDING STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES

NZ On Air, as the Broadcasting Commission of New Zealand, outlines an investment strategy for music that focuses on achieving key broadcast outcomes. Its primary purpose is to get more Aotearoa music consumed by local audiences on platforms like local radio stations and digital streaming platforms (DSPs). This strategy takes a comprehensive approach, aiming to nurture and promote the creation and distribution of music that reflects the diverse culture of Aotearoa. Recognising the vital role music plays in shaping national identity, NZ On Air's funding model not only supports the creation and recording of local music but also emphasises its promotion and discoverability across broadcast platforms.

Central to this strategy is the provision of multiple funding rounds throughout the year that cater to different aspects of music creation. Each category targets specific needs within the music industry, from supporting single recordings and releases, to more comprehensive multi-song projects. By offering varied funding opportunities, NZ On Air looks to ensure that artists can access the support they need to create and share their work.

The strategy also emphasises the importance of discoverability in a crowded digital and media landscape. NZ On Air helps to promote the music it funds, helping it reach audiences through streaming services, local radio, and media outlets. This promotion is crucial in a time where the sheer volume of content available can make it challenging for new and local music to gain traction. By investing in promotion, NZ On Air aims to ensure that the music it supports not only gets produced but is also heard and appreciated by a wide local audience.

NZ On Air in its investment strategy also states its recognition of the importance of cultural representation and equity in funding decisions. Therefore, it has included specific initiatives that support waiata reo, Pasifika and Pan-Asian artists, as well as artists making children's music. This commitment is aligned with NZ On Air's broader goals of fostering inclusivity and ensuring that all audiences within New Zealand have access to and are represented in the media landscape.

Moreover, NZ On Air places the audience at the heart of its approach, emphasising the critical role of discoverability in a crowded digital and media landscape. NZ On Air helps to promote the music it funds to ensure it reaches listeners across local radio and the streaming services. In an era where the sheer volume of content can make it difficult for new and local music to gain visibility, this promotion is essential. NZ On Air's investment ensures that the music it supports connects with and resonates with audiences across Aotearoa, making the audience the central focus of its funding efforts, and contributing to the national cultural identity.

NZ On Air's music funding programmes are designed to support different aspects of music creation and promotion in New Zealand:

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>New Music Single:</b>      | Funding of up to \$11k available. Can be used for recording a single, creating visual content to promote the single and other promotion costs to increase New Zealand audience awareness and engagement with the audio and video content. Open for five (5) rounds per year. Requires a minimum 10 out of 30 criteria met to be able to apply. |
| <b>New Music Pasifika:</b>    | Funding of up to \$11k available. Supports music projects by Pasifika artists, created in 2019 to boost NZ On Air's reach to under-served audiences, with Pasifika audiences being identified as under-served. One (1) round per year. There is no criteria required (other than Pasifika descent) to be able to apply.                        |
| <b>Pan-Asian Music Fund</b>   | Funding of up to \$11k available. Supports music projects by Pan-Asian artists, created in response to the lack of equitable representation of Pan-Asian New Zealand musicians in the Aotearoa music sector. One (1) round per year. There is no criteria required (other than Pan-Asian descent) to be able to apply.                         |
| <b>New Music Kids</b>         | Funding of up to \$11k available. For creating children's music. One (1) round per year. There is no criteria required to be able to apply.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Waiata Takitahi</b>        | Funding of up to \$15k available. A co-fund launched as a collaboration between NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho for artists of any whakapapa recording bilingually with a minimum 25% te reo Māori. One (1) round per year. Requires a minimum of five out of 25 criteria met to be able to apply.                                                |
| <b>New Music Project</b>      | Funding of between \$11k and \$55k available for multi-song projects. Applicants must have a demonstrable and significant audience and broadcast track record and there is criteria to be able to apply. Three (3) rounds per year.                                                                                                            |
| <b>New Music Project Kids</b> | Funding of between \$11k and \$55k available for multi-song children's music projects Applicants must have a demonstrable and significant audience and broadcast track records and there is criteria to be able to apply. One (1) round per year.                                                                                              |
| <b>New Music Development</b>  | Supports the development of new songs for emerging artists working alongside established music producers within New Zealand. <u>Currently paused while NZOA consults with industry on the best way to fund development going forward. This decision was made after industry feedback in their Music Funding Review from October 2023.</u>      |

NZ On Air has already responded to some of the recommendations coming out of the October 2023 Music Funding Review, including making the Artist Creation fee mandatory on all funding streams and on top of the funding amount, changes to New Music Project including increased funding amounts, no financial co-investment and funding provided in advances.

## TE PAE TATA - RAUTAKI MĀORI 2024/25

Te Pae Tata - Rautaki Māori 2024/25 was published in June 2024 and is a comprehensive strategy by NZ On Air aimed at enhancing Māori content creation and audience engagement. The music-specific strategy is underpinned by two primary goals: establishing an evidence base for Māori music outcomes, and maximising opportunities for growth within the sector.

The first step for NZ On Air in supporting Māori music creators is to understand their needs and the challenges they face, informing the development of tailored strategies aimed at nurturing the Māori music sector. These strategies will be evidence-based, ensuring they address the specific needs identified. By grounding their approach in real-world data and community feedback, NZ On Air aims to implement actions that have a tangible impact on the success and visibility of Māori music.

The second goal focuses on ensuring that Māori music creators have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. One of the key initiatives under this goal is the continuation of the Waiata Takitahi co-fund, a partnership between NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho. This co-fund provides targeted financial support to Māori music projects, helping to ensure that these projects can thrive in a competitive industry.

In addition to financial support, NZ On Air will also focus on promoting Māori music more broadly. This includes funding for New Music Singles and New Music Projects, which provide those successful Māori artists with the resources they need to create and distribute their music.

Promotion efforts are also a critical component of this strategy. By raising the profile of Māori music through various channels, NZ On Air aims to increase the reach and impact of this music, both within Māori communities and across the wider New Zealand audience.

Partnerships are a cornerstone of Te Pae Tata. By working closely with Te Māngai Pāho and engaging with the broader Māori music community, NZ On Air looks to ensure that its strategies are aligned with the needs and aspirations of Māori musicians. These collaborations also help to keep the funding initiatives relevant and responsive to changes in the music industry.

To ensure the effectiveness of these strategies, NZ On Air will conduct regular reviews of Te Pae Tata. These reviews will assess the impact of the strategies on Māori music outcomes and provide the data needed to make informed adjustments. By maintaining a commitment to continuous improvement, NZ On Air aims to nurture the Māori music sector and their audiences, in turn supporting a thriving environment for Māori music where artists can flourish, and their contributions to New Zealand's cultural landscape are celebrated.

## THE IMPACT OF NZ ON AIR FUNDING

When looking at the impact of NZ On Air music funding on the music sector, it is clear that the distribution of financial support plays a crucial role in shaping the environment for artists, including Māori musicians. The accessibility of funds from NZ On Air can significantly influence an artist's ability to create, produce, and market their music. Additionally, NZ On Air's strategic partnerships with other organisations and media platforms can maximise the reach of their funding. Collaborative efforts with radio stations, television, and digital platforms mean that funded music has the potential to reach a broad audience, boosting its commercial potential.

By supporting music projects, NZ On Air also indirectly benefits related sectors such as live performance, music production, music management and event management. This ecosystem thrives on a trickle-down effect, where the success of funded projects can lead to increased demand for various community professionals.

The 2022/2023 NZ On Air Diversity Report reported that for New Music Project funding, Māori artists comprised 8% of applications and received 10% of funding, down from 2021/22's funded figure of 15% (from 11% of applications). However, when combined with artists from Māori/ Pākehā backgrounds, the overall Māori success rate grew to 29% (based on 16% of applications), an increase on 2021/22 (26%) and 2020/21 (24%). Applicants who identify as Māori/Pasifika constituted 4% of applicants and received 5% of funding.

Similar percentages are found in New Music Single, where Māori artists made up 9.2% of successful applicants and European/Māori 9.77% (18.97% combined).

While on the surface these statistics look positive, it is important to note that relying solely on quantitative statistics can present a misleading picture of success and engagement. While these statistics might suggest positive outcomes, they fail to capture the lived realities and nuanced barriers Māori artists face within the system. Quantitative data can obscure the qualitative, culturally specific needs that Māori artists require to truly thrive. Indigenous engagement with funding bodies is often shaped by factors like cultural preservation, differing views of success, and structural inequalities that numbers alone cannot reflect. As highlighted in Victoria Kelly's review, a comprehensive understanding requires not just numbers but also an exploration of the systemic and cultural obstacles that Māori artists encounter. Statistics can inadvertently reinforce a narrative of "success" while overlooking the ongoing challenges faced by Māori artists in accessing equitable support.

“  
***I have been one of the lucky guys getting funding pretty consistently for the last few years...I got single funding a few times. Uum, it took me like 10 applications before I got successful....Perseverance?***

# BARRIERS FOR MĀORI MUSICIANS IN ENGAGING WITH NZ ON AIR

“  
*Now, we sort of, and I'm just going to be honest, we don't actually apply anymore. The reason why we don't apply is because of the amount of bureaucracy and red tape.*

In all the interviews conducted, there was a prevailing sense of gratitude that NZ On Air and its music funding exist. Whether or not they had received funding, those spoken to recognised how fortunate music artists are to have NZ On Air funding and support for creating music in Aotearoa. However, these positive sentiments were tempered by recurring challenges that prevent many Māori artists from fully engaging with the system.

“  
*I just kind of gave up.*

## CHALLENGES IN NAVIGATING THE APPLICATION PROCESS

While NZ On Air's policies aim for inclusivity, the perceptions shared by interviewees reflect a disconnect. The application and contracting processes within NZ On Air have been identified as a notable barrier, particularly for those emerging and/or self-managing (without management or a support network). Although comprehensive written criteria and guidelines are available online, these processes are frequently viewed as overly intricate and bureaucratic, creating a sense of intimidation and frustration. This complexity arises from several interconnected issues:

- **LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:**

The use of technical jargon and formal language in application forms often challenge artists unfamiliar with such documentation. Misunderstandings and errors in applications due to unclear language can ultimately result in disqualification or rejection. Simplified, plain-language instructions, alongside culturally appropriate examples, could reduce these barriers.

- **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:**

Extensive documentation, such as project plans, budgets, and marketing strategies (more specifically in New Music Project applications), can be daunting. Many artists, and again those working independently or without formal management, may not have the resources or expertise to compile such comprehensive documentation. This requirement can deter talented artists from applying, as they feel unprepared to meet these demands.

- **TIME-CONSUMING NATURE:**

Preparing applications demands significant effort and time, which can be challenging for artists juggling multiple responsibilities, including family and other employment. For Māori artists, this burden may be heightened by obligations to community and whānau, leaving even less time for extensive application preparation. Streamlining the process to reduce these demands could significantly improve accessibility.

“  
*The process of preparing an application is often time-consuming...especially for those juggling multiple responsibilities, including other jobs, whānau, and marae commitments.*

- **LACK OF TRANSPARENCY:**

Some interviewees expressed concerns about transparency in the decision-making process, noting the absence of feedback on unsuccessful applications and a perceived misalignment between some funding decisions and the published criteria. This experienced lack of communication and absence of constructive feedback can impede artist development and progress, with artists left guessing about what improvements are needed. The uncertainty can be discouraging and disheartening, with artists no longer applying to NZ On Air and instead self-funding or seeking other funding pathways. Enhancing feedback mechanisms and offering clear decision rationales could help artists better understand the process and improve their future applications.

“  
*It's the not knowing that's the issue. It feels like there can be barriers to receiving the funding, but because of the lack of feedback, you're unsure really what those barriers are.*

“  
*You just hear nothing, and then you read your name, or not. It's something that I feel like is really lacking a little bit of perspective, you know. Especially for young artists, it could be a little bit detrimental to your progress and your mental health, potentially, as well.*

- **SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE:**

A critical gap exists in the support available for navigating these processes. Many artists noted difficulty accessing guidance, with emails and calls to NZ On Air going unanswered. They also highlighted the absence of accessible resources, such as online Q&A sessions or step-by-step application walkthroughs. Establishing dedicated application workshops, mentorship programmes (potentially involving previous successful applicants), and personalised support could empower Māori artists to navigate these systems with greater confidence.

“  
*I think from an educational perspective, I think more education on not the application process, but exactly how to go about, like, doing things like putting together a budget, finding, getting quotes, like, all the admin that you have to do, there's zero education.*

## FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

Financial constraints were also identified by those interviewed as a significant barrier for many Māori artists seeking to engage with NZ On Air's funding mechanisms, particularly New Music Project. One of the most notable issues was the requirement for upfront financial investment. This requirement means artists often need to produce music videos or other promotional materials before they can access funding, which poses several challenges, including lack of initial capital, increased financial risk, inequitable access to opportunities or outside skill/support, and stifling creative output.

It is noted however that between the time of interviewing and report completion NZ On Air announced changes to their funding schemes in response to the October 2023 Music Funding Review.

These changes include:

- Increasing project funding to \$55,000.
- Ending the requirement for financial co-investment.
- Shifting the drawdown process from reimbursements to advances.
- Making the 10% Artist Creation Fee 'in addition to funding amount' mandatory across the grants.

These updates aim to better support artists by addressing increased costs and providing cash flow and flexibility for music production and release.

## CULTURAL MISALIGNMENT

Cultural differences can present challenges to Māori engaging with NZ On Air. Although its remit emphasises broadcasting outcomes and audience reach, such criteria often exclude Māori musicians whose artistic goals are rooted in cultural preservation and collective success rather than individual gains. This misalignment disproportionately affects Māori artists, who may view NZ On Air's frameworks as reinforcing colonial structures that prioritise Western measures of success, creating a sense of exclusion and discomfort which affects their willingness and ability to participate not only in funding processes but also with NZ On Air and other music industry bodies.

Therefore, while it is acknowledged that the priorities below may sit outside NZ On Air's current remit, the broader inclusion of culturally relevant criteria and representation would provide a more equitable pathway for Māori engagement.

“  
**NZ On Air are asking why aren't Māori engaging? Right. But should the question not be why are they not engaging with Māori?**

“  
**A lot of Māori artists are very community focused with their whānau... I wonder if there's a way to make it more about what you're planning to do with this waiata in terms of connecting and engaging with the community.**

- **LACK OF REPRESENTATION:**

The lack of Māori representation in decision-making and assessment processes affects the trust and engagement of Māori artists with NZ On Air. When independent Māori voices are missing from decision-making panels, there is a significant risk that the unique perspectives and needs of Māori aren't adequately understood or valued. This absence perpetuates a cycle of misunderstanding and mistrust, where Māori artists feel that their cultural contexts and artistic goals are neither recognised nor respected.

“  
**Having Māori on selection panels would help ensure that funding decisions are culturally informed and fair.**

“  
**The panel is predominantly made up of radio, very Pākehā music driven. They don't even have the understanding of that. So maybe the work starts there.**

- **UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL VALUES AND PRACTICES:**

Te Ao Māori emphasises community, collective success, and the interconnectedness of all aspects of life, including art. Traditional funding mechanisms often focus on individual achievement and commercial success, which can conflict with the values of Māori artists. For instance, the requirement to provide detailed project plans, budgets, and marketing strategies can feel overly individualistic, commercial, and uncomfortable, clashing with a more holistic and community-focused approach to creating art.

“  
**I'm just trying to make something, you know, some quality art for someone to enjoy. But I felt like I needed to fit into a specific mould that wasn't really me.**

- **NEED FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT CRITERIA:**

The criteria used to evaluate funding applications often do not reflect Māori cultural values and practices. For example, the emphasis on NZ On Air's remit of broadcast outcomes and market potential, alongside a perceived focus on commercial viability, can be at odds with the artistic goals of Māori musicians, who may prioritise cultural expression and community or societal impact over commercial success. This misalignment leads to disengagement.

“  
**They are not going to get selected because they're not playing in the same competition that the panelists are picking from.**

- **LACK OF TRUST:**

The historical marginalisation of Māori from decision-making roles in society, industry and government means a lingering mistrust in organisations like NZ On Air. An absence of independent Māori voices on funding panels reinforces the perception that Māori values and perspectives are not respected or understood. For Māori artists, this lack of representation is not just a practical barrier but also a symbolic one, rooted in centuries of colonialism and systemic exclusion from cultural institutions.

“  
**It's almost like, well, if you want us to engage more, then we need to know that we're not just ticking a box for you.**

Building trust between Māori artists and NZ On Air requires the meaningful inclusion of Māori perspectives at all levels of the organisation. This means not only having Māori representation on decision-making panels but also involving Māori advisors in the development and implementation of funding policies and criteria. Such inclusion can help ensure that funding mechanisms are culturally aligned and supportive of Māori artists.



*Sometimes I think the reo could almost be a barrier, or it could be forced, or it could make a song not be heard, make a message not be heard. That is really important to get out to the world.*

## **CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BARRIERS: TE REO MĀORI REQUIREMENT**

The requirement for funding rounds to focus on te reo Māori, even in small ways, can serve as both a motivator and a barrier for Māori artists. While te reo Māori is a crucial part of Māori culture and its revitalisation is important, not all Māori music is performed in te reo Māori and some of those interviewed saw this requirement as exclusionary.

For many Māori artists, including te reo Māori in their music is a source of pride and cultural significance. It aligns with their personal and community values, promotes the language, and contributes to its revitalisation. This requirement can encourage artists to incorporate te reo Māori into their work, helping to keep the language alive and relevant in contemporary contexts.

However, the requirement can also act as a barrier for artists who do not perform in te reo Māori. As stated, while the emphasis on te reo Māori is essential for cultural revitalisation, it can inadvertently exclude Māori artists who are not fluent but still wish to express their cultural identity through music. This disproportionately affects Māori musicians who, despite being deeply connected to their whakapapa, may not have the language skills required to meet this criterion.

Artists who do not use te reo Māori in their music often find themselves with fewer resources and support. The funding streams dedicated to promoting te reo Māori are significant, but there is a gap in support for those who wish to produce music that reflects their Māori identity without using te reo. As a result, these artists face a double barrier: the challenge of engaging with the funding system as Māori and the pressure to conform to a specific cultural expression, limiting their ability to reach broader audiences and share their unique perspectives.

The current emphasis on te reo Māori in funding criteria highlights the need for more inclusive approaches that recognise and support the diversity of Māori musical expressions. While promoting te reo Māori is essential, it is also important to provide opportunities for artists who express their Māori identity through other means. Creating more inclusive funding rounds that don't strictly require te reo Māori can help ensure that all Māori artists have the opportunity to access support and share their music.



*There's no real safe space to play if you're a Māori artist not writing and recording in te reo.*

# THE POTENTIAL OF MĀORI TO BE DISENGAGED BY CHOICE - SELF-RELIANCE AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

The involvement of Māori musicians with NZ On Air and its funding frameworks is complex, involving not only obstacles but deliberate choices not to engage. While those interviewed have experienced issues, equally there are those that are choosing not to engage for deeper reasons related to cultural integrity and sovereignty. Understanding that disengagement by choice is a form of resistance, rather than a failure to participate, is crucial. Māori musicians are not disengaged because they are unaware of funding opportunities or incapable of navigating the application process. Rather, their disengagement is a conscious decision to preserve their cultural values and artistic autonomy.

Māori often prioritise their cultural values, mana motuhake, and authenticity over mainstream validation. This leads them to intentionally disengage from funding programmes they perceive as culturally incompatible. This perspective challenges the idea that external obstacles are the sole reason for low participation, highlighting the active choice Māori artists make to navigate the music industry on their own terms.

For example, music for Māori is deeply intertwined with storytelling, cultural preservation, and the upholding of tikanga Māori. Mainstream markers of success that are focused on commercial and broadcast outcomes can feel limiting or irrelevant to those who view their work primarily to connect with their community or preserve mātauranga. These artists may choose to disengage from NZ On Air and similar institutions, not because of a lack of opportunity, but because the structures do not align with their identity or artistic intent.

— “  
*Yes, go to NZ On Air, but this is what that means. Or go and do it on your own. Don't let that determine or dictate whether you're going to still be an amazing artist.*

— “  
*I mean, to be fair, I feel like we're in a place right now where we're not really turning to NZ On Air because ultimately we know it's a part of the system.*

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CHOSEN DISENGAGEMENT

The concept of disengagement by choice is not new for Indigenous communities. Historically, colonisation imposed systems of governance, economics, and culture that were incompatible with Indigenous ways of life. For Māori, this included the suppression of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and Toi Māori expressions. Over time, the imposition of Western structures created a legacy of mistrust in state institutions, which continues to shape how Māori engage with these systems today.

Many Māori musicians therefore choose self-reliance or alternative pathways as a way to resist the encroachment of colonial frameworks. These decisions are part of a broader movement towards mana motuhake, where Māori assert their right to create and share music in ways that honour their traditions, free from the constraints of externally imposed criteria.

## ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS AND SELF-RELIANCE

Māori musicians who disengage from government funding often carve out their own paths by seeking opportunities within their communities or through independent means. These alternative pathways might include:

- **Whānau and Community-Based Support:** Rather than relying on institutional funding, many Māori artists are supported by their whānau or wider community, who provide not only financial backing but also cultural validation. This form of support aligns with Māori values of collective responsibility and community upliftment.

- **Crowdfunding and Independent Ventures:** The rise of digital platforms has allowed Māori musicians to bypass traditional processes and connect directly with their audiences. Crowdfunding initiatives, direct-to-fan marketing, and grassroots promotion have become viable alternatives that enable artists to retain control over their work.
- **Cultural Initiatives and Kaupapa Māori Projects:** Initiatives designed by Māori for Māori provide culturally safe spaces for artists to develop and share their music. Similarly, kaupapa Māori projects such as Waiata Anthems or APRA's Reo Māori Songhubs, while having received external funding, are often preferred by those seeking environments that respect and promote their cultural identity, offering a stark contrast to the more commercially oriented frameworks.

Disengagement from NZ On Air by some Māori artists is an intentional act, rooted in their commitment to mana motuhake and cultural sovereignty. By prioritising community connection, cultural expression, and the preservation of Māori knowledge over commercial metrics, these artists assert their independence from systems they view as misaligned with their values. Recognising this as a conscious act rather than a barrier reframes the narrative, highlighting the importance of respecting these choices. By embracing such perspectives, the music industry can foster a more inclusive and culturally attuned environment that honours diverse expressions of Māori identity.

“  
***When I started talking to artists, self-managed artists in particular, there are things in the process of NZ On Air that don't sit well with Māori. Or they become disillusioned with NZ On Air. And so as we do, because we're innovators and used to doing it on our own, they start funding themselves through whatever way.***

# BEYOND FUNDING - STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY OF MĀORI ARTISTS

Part of advancing the abilities and capabilities of Māori artists involves providing support frameworks tailored to their needs within the music industry. While this report recognises that this work does not necessarily fall within the direct remit of NZ On Air, it's important to note that every aspect of an artist's journey through the industry must work together for authentic success, however that's defined.

## KAUPAPA MĀORI-LED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND SUPPORT

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***Creating environments where artists can collaborate, learn from each other, and receive consistent support throughout their careers is essential.***

Development programmes by Māori for Māori are crucial for addressing the unique challenges and opportunities Māori artists and their support networks face in the music industry. Delivered in a kaupapa Māori way, these initiatives ensure cultural alignment and offer skills and knowledge to succeed. The recent APRA AMCOS led Reo Māori Songhubs and Taumata Programme alongside the pan-industry Waiata Anthems initiative, acts as quantifiable proof that such programmes are valuable to the upskilling of Māori artists. It is noted however that each of these programmes again cater to artists writing and performing in te reo Māori, and do not extend to Māori artists writing and performing in te reo Pākehā. Programmes should be designed to help artists develop their musical and creative skills, as well as their understanding of the music industry. This includes workshops, masterclasses, and access to resources that can help artists refine their craft and market their music. Ensuring that Māori artists are not left feeling disillusioned or overlooked due to a lack of knowledge or support is crucial, particularly when it comes to putting their best foot forward in funding applications.

While mentorship and capability-building programs that align with kaupapa Māori and mātauranga Māori are critical for the success of Māori musicians, these initiatives are seen to fall outside of NZ On Air's current remit, with little known by those interviewed about its sector support funding. More education and a more expansive approach that integrates Māori-led mentorship and professional development opportunities would better align with the needs of these artists.

The initiation of kaupapa Māori-driven growth programmes holds considerable promise in overcoming the obstacles Māori musicians face in accessing NZ On Air music funding. By focusing these efforts on cultural principles, community needs, and Māori perspectives, such programmes can provide tailored support that resonates more deeply with the artists involved. Empowering Māori artists through specialised training, mentoring, and resources that align with their cultural environment can enhance their competence and capacity within the music field. These initiatives can offer a comprehensive approach that supports not only the artists but also extends assistance to their support networks, including managers, publicists, and booking agents. Furthermore, the inclusion of kaupapa Māori-driven business development schemes can help create a more inclusive and culturally secure environment within the funding framework.

## RESOURCE ALLOCATION FOR SUPPORT NETWORKS SUCH AS MANAGERS AND PUBLICISTS

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***It's incredible having the support of someone who understands who you are. Because we've had a few fails with publicity, when they've just kind of tried to target you maybe for more mainstream, without realising that you're not mainstream.***

Helping Māori musicians thrive in the music industry means putting resources into essential support systems, like managers and publicists. These key players are crucial for navigating the complex music scene, offering guidance, advocacy, and marketing strategies to boost artists' profiles. Managers can provide personalised support, mentorship, contract negotiations, and strategic career development, enhancing Māori artists' chances of success in a competitive field. Publicists, on the other hand, help shape the public image of artists, gain media exposure, and expand their audience reach.

However, there is a significant lack of Māori professionals in these critical roles, highlighting the need for focused initiatives to build capacity in this area. Tailored development and training programmes are essential for nurturing the next generation of Māori music managers and publicists. These initiatives should incorporate cultural principles and align with the needs of Māori musicians, ensuring that support systems are accessible, culturally relevant, and impactful.

Investing in skilled managers and publicists can also tackle the unique challenges Māori artists face when engaging with NZ On Air and other funding bodies. These professionals bring expertise and connections that simplify funding applications, ensure fair representation, and advocate for Māori artists' cultural and creative goals. With effective resource allocation and collaboration, support systems can amplify cultural representation, maintain authenticity, and elevate Māori voices within the music industry. These efforts will not only bridge gaps between Māori artists and the music industry but also foster a more inclusive and diverse music landscape in Aotearoa.

Sector Support funding available through NZ On Air could provide a pathway to address these gaps. While this funding is designed to enhance industry capabilities, interviews with stakeholders reveal a widespread lack of awareness about its existence. Greater communication and promotion of their Sector Support funding could help build Māori representation in management and publicity roles, creating a stronger support network for Māori artists.

— “ —  
***What support do the support networks need?***

# A DEDICATED FOCUS ROUND FOR MĀORI ARTISTS

“  
***A whakapapa Māori round would be sick!***

A proposal to establish a specific focus round for whakapapa Māori artists within the funding structure of NZ On Air, specifically without a te reo Māori focus, could bring significant positive changes in the inclusion and support of Māori voices in the music industry. By allocating distinct financial opportunities tailored for Māori musicians, NZ On Air could address the imbalances and challenges, especially regarding funding and widespread recognition. This targeted approach could create pathways for more equitable access to resources, enabling Māori artists to pursue their creative endeavours with greater support and acknowledgment. Such a specialised round could also showcase the diverse musical genres and styles that Māori are recording in, contributing to the rich musical landscape of Aotearoa.

There is a strong sense from those interviewed that the lack of a dedicated funding round for tangata whenua without a te reo Māori component is a significant oversight. Just as our Pacific and Asian communities have targeted funding to support their unique cultural expressions, Māori artists also deserve a similar platform, particularly as the Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa. This would not only promote equity but also ensure that Māori voices are adequately represented in the music industry.

“  
***Dedicated funding rounds for Māori artists, similar to those for Pasifika and Pan-Asian artists, would help ensure equitable opportunities for Māori artists and allow them to pursue their artistic vision without being forced to conform to mainstream expectations.***

Implementing a designated focus round for Māori with no language criteria would promote greater cultural inclusion and appreciation, similar to New Music Pasifika and New Music Pan Asian. By recognising the unique cultural perspectives and artistic talents of Māori, NZ On Air would demonstrate its commitment to diversity and cultural representation within its funding framework. The potential benefits of such a dedicated round extend beyond financial backing, representing a crucial step towards acknowledging and valuing Māori as tangata whenua and their contributions to the musical domain. This emphasis on funding opportunities could amplify Māori voices, celebrate cultural heritage, and increase the visibility of Māori music on national platforms, ultimately enriching Aotearoa's artistic landscape.

Moreover, a specific focus round for Māori artists without a language requirement within NZ On Air may cultivate stronger interactions and partnerships within the music community. By creating an exclusive space for Māori musicians to excel and share their art, this proposal could enhance capacity and capability within the community, nurturing growth, innovation, and enduring careers in the music domain.

However, evaluating the introduction of a dedicated focus round for Māori artists also involves acknowledging potential obstacles and consequences. Despite the well-intentioned basis of this initiative, some of those interviewed shared concerns about the unintended segregation of Māori artists from broader funding pools, inadvertently perpetuating stereotypes, particularly in the current political climate. Therefore, it is crucial to thoroughly assess the impact of a dedicated focus round on the entire music funding ecosystem and on the perceptions of Māori artists. Moreover, the success of this strategy in promoting long-term sustainability and prosperity for Māori musicians must be carefully examined to ensure it aligns with the broader goals of inclusivity and cultural preservation within the music industry.

## COMPARISON WITH EXISTING INITIATIVES LIKE NEW MUSIC PASIFIKA AND NEW MUSIC PAN-ASIAN

Existing funding rounds, such as New Music Pasifika and New Music Pan-Asian, demonstrate the potential of targeted rounds to elevate underrepresented voices in the music industry without the need for a language requirement. New Music Pasifika has been instrumental in showcasing Pasifika narratives, while New Music Pan-Asian has bridged cultural gaps and amplified Asian voices. These rounds provide a model for how NZ On Air can create more tailored opportunities for Māori musicians. By learning from the successes of these initiatives, NZ On Air could develop a focus round that not only supports Māori artists but also reflects the cultural authenticity and sensitivity required to ensure meaningful representation.

Moreover, the experiences and outcomes of established focus rounds provide valuable insights into enhancing cultural safety, representation, and accountability specific to different community perspectives. These initiatives have addressed obstacles faced by Pasifika, Asian, and Children's music artists, offering a guide for NZ On Air to develop a more inclusive and supportive environment for Māori musicians. By adopting lessons from these successful models, NZ On Air can integrate cultural authenticity and sensitivity into its funding processes, ensuring that Māori voices are not only heard but also valued. Through initiatives that focus on cultural nuances and varied artistic expressions, NZ On Air can further its commitment to supporting a thriving and inclusive music environment that celebrates Māori heritage and creativity.

“  
***I feel like they're doing an awesome job with the Pasifika and Asian rounds. It's been a game changer for those communities. So why not do the same for Māori?***

## **ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO ENSURE EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION AND SUPPORT FOR MĀORI VOICES**

Discussing alternative approaches to secure equitable representation and support for Māori voices within the music industry requires a thoughtful approach. One key strategy could involve embedding cultural safety prerequisites within NZ On Air's current funding streams. This would create a more inclusive environment that respects and uplifts Māori viewpoints, addressing the distinct needs and challenges faced by Māori artists and ensuring their voices are acknowledged and promoted. Additionally, establishing accountability measures specifically dedicated to Māori representation could enhance trust in the funding processes, fostering fairness and equity.

- **INTEGRATING MĀORI ARTISTS INTO EXISTING ROUNDS**

Instead of creating a separate tangata whenua round, efforts could be made to make existing funding rounds more inclusive. As previously discussed, this could involve mandated independent Māori representation in the assessment process and on assessment panels, and the incorporation of Tikanga Māori into funding criteria, to better reflect the needs and realities of Māori musicians. This approach aims to integrate Māori artists into mainstream rounds while providing the necessary support and adjustments to make the process more accessible.

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***What could be done in that process to improve the process for Māori?***

- **BROAD TARGETED ROUNDS**

Another approach could be to remove separate rounds for Pasifika and Pan-Asian artists and instead create broader targeted rounds. These rounds would still focus on specific groups but within a larger, more inclusive framework. This would ensure that various cultural backgrounds are represented and supported without isolating any particular group. It would also aim to foster a more inclusive environment by having specialised panels for different music genres and cultural backgrounds.

- **MIDDLE TIER OF SUPPORT**

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***Invest in the grassroots development of music because you need the pipeline. We need to keep artists engaged and excited about joining that middle tier. But there's no clear middle tier.***

Introducing a middle tier of support could focus on artists who are not yet fully developed but show potential. This tier would provide targeted development opportunities to help artists progress and eventually meet the higher criteria of major funding rounds.

By adopting these alternative methods, NZ On Air could greatly enhance support for Māori musicians while addressing the barriers they face in accessing funding. Whether through a dedicated focus round or through reforms within existing funding structures, the goal should be to foster a more inclusive and equitable environment that recognises and values Māori voices. Establishing partnerships with Māori artists, industry stakeholders, and community leaders will be crucial to co-creating initiatives that reflect the needs and aspirations of Māori talent.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

When reviewing the discussions, it is clear that there are a few key recommendations to help Māori musicians engage better with NZ On Air music funding. While many of the barriers outlined in this review may not be entirely unique to Māori artists, it is essential to recognise that the response and strategies required be tailored to Māori experiences. Māori artists face distinct cultural and systemic challenges that require bespoke solutions which may differ from those applicable to the wider artist community. Victoria Kelly's 2023 review highlighted similar issues within the current frameworks and emphasised that, while NZ On Air's processes aim for inclusivity, gaps remain in addressing the unique needs of Māori artists.

First off, there is a need to make the funding application process clearer and more transparent. Māori value clarity in communication and transparency within relationships, reflecting whakapono and pono. NZ On Air could adopt processes that reflect these values, ensuring that funding applications are easy to navigate and comprehend, with varying ways to present guidelines to cater to different comprehension styles. Providing personalised support, such as kanohi ki te kanohi drop-ins or Zoom sessions, would foster a sense of whanaungatanga between NZ On Air and Māori artists, creating an environment where artists feel supported throughout the application process.

It is also important to focus on cultural safety and proper representation within NZ On Air's funding streams. This is central to ensuring that Māori artists feel culturally safe and represented. NZ On Air must move to incorporate mechanisms in-line with their Te Pae Tata strategy that reflect Māori viewpoints and ensure authentic cultural portrayal in its funding decisions. This involves ensuring that the mana of Māori artists is upheld, which would help build trust and accountability within the system, encouraging greater participation from Māori artists.

Additionally, specific development and training programmes that align with kaupapa Māori principles are essential to meet the unique needs of Māori artists in the music sector. These programmes, grounded in Te Ao Māori, would not only provide the technical and business skills necessary for Māori artists to thrive but also nurture their wairua and mauri as core aspects of their creative journeys. These programmes should offer whanaungatanga and mentorship, enabling artists to gain both personal and professional growth that resonates with their cultural values.

Allocating resources to mentorship programmes and materials that cater to diverse cultural backgrounds will not only promote artistic growth but also create a more inclusive and supportive industry environment. The intergenerational sharing of knowledge through ako is vital. By allocating resources to mentorship programmes and the training of culturally relevant support networks like managers and publicists, NZ On Air can help foster relationships that empower Māori artists. It is also clear through conversations had that there is a distinct lack of awareness of the availability of Sector Support Funding through NZ On Air and more can be done to encourage applications. Recognising the misalignment and working in partnership with other agencies could ensure holistic support for Māori artists that addresses both cultural and systemic barriers.

It is also important to consider either a dedicated funding round for Māori artists or better representation for Māori (Māori music industry professionals, cultural advisors, or kaihautū) in the general funding rounds. A dedicated funding stream that highlights Māori voices, without focusing solely on te reo Māori, would honour the principle of mana motuhake for Māori artists. This allows artists to express their identity and creativity in ways that resonate with them personally and culturally. Alternatively, ensuring the presence of proper Māori representation in general funding rounds ensures a culturally informed perspective in decision-making and validates the unique needs and contributions of Māori musicians.

By exploring innovative ways to support Māori musicians, NZ On Air has the potential to create a more inclusive, culturally responsive, and supportive environment for Māori artists. This not only empowers the artists themselves but also amplifies the rich diversity of voices that are integral to Aotearoa's music scene.

# ACTIONABLE SOLUTIONS

## BUILD GENUINE RELATIONSHIPS

- Prioritise building authentic relationships with Māori communities and artists, ensuring their voices are heard and their contributions valued.
- Offer funding workshops, mentoring sessions, or information drop-ins held in culturally safe spaces, such as kaupapa Māori organisations.

## SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS

- Ensure that the objectives and criteria of the funding rounds are succinct and easy to understand.
- Streamline application and contracting processes, and provide different ways to present the information, in order to make them more accessible and less daunting.
- Provide different ways to learn more about the application processes (including in-person hui and video)

## INCORPORATE TIKANGA MĀORI INTO FUNDING CRITERIA AND APPLICATIONS

- Embed concepts such as manaakitanga (hospitality), whanaungatanga (relationships), and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) into the criteria for assessing funding applications. For example:  
Manaakitanga: Assess how projects uplift and support others in the community.  
Whanaungatanga: Value collaborations with other Māori artists, hapori or iwi.  
Kaitiakitanga: Recognise contributions to preserving and revitalising Māori music and cultural identity.
- Allow applicants to present their proposals in formats that align with Māori values and communication styles, such as kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face discussions), oral presentations, or visual storytelling. This acknowledges the diversity of how Māori share their mātauranga (knowledge).

## ESTABLISH A LIAISON ROLE

- Establish a Māori liaison or funding navigator role within NZ On Air. This person could guide Māori artists through the funding process, help them align their project proposals with criteria, and act as a point of contact for questions.

## REPRESENTATION IN DECISION-MAKING

- Include independent Māori music industry professionals, cultural advisors, or kaihautū on funding assessment panels. Their presence ensures a culturally informed perspective in decision-making and validates the unique needs and contributions of Māori musicians.

## TAILORED FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT

- Provide culturally sensitive feedback for unsuccessful applications, focusing on constructive pathways forward rather than rigid rejection. Incorporate a wānanga (discussion) approach to help applicants refine their work.

## SUPPORT THROUGH PROFESSIONAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Support kaupapa Māori programmes designed to help artists develop their musical and creative skills, as well as their understanding of the music industry, including workshops, masterclasses, and access to resources like mentorship programmes.
- Encourage kaupapa Māori applications for Sector Support Funding that provides emerging Māori music managers and publicists the support they need.
- Promote collaborations and partnerships with other organisations and areas of the hapori puoro to help distribute the financial load and provide artists with the necessary resources to meet application requirements.

## EVALUATE A DEDICATED FOCUS ROUND

- Consider either a dedicated focus round for Māori artists or proper representation for Māori in the general funding rounds. This specialised funding stream should highlight Māori voices without focusing solely on te reo Māori outcomes.
- Balance the requirement for te reo Māori in funding applications with the need to support a diverse range of Māori musical expressions. While promoting te reo Māori is vital, and achieved through Waiata Takitahi, it is equally important to support artists who may not use the language but still contribute significantly to Māori culture and identity.

## MICRO-GRANTS AND SEED FUNDING

- Offer smaller, more accessible grants for initial project phases, enabling artists to work on and develop high-quality proposals and 'grow into' bigger funding rounds.

## REGULAR EVALUATIONS WITH INPUT FROM MĀORI

- In-line with Te Pae Tata create mechanisms to assess the cultural safety of funding programmes regularly. Engage Māori artists and community representatives in evaluating whether processes are supportive, fair, and culturally aligned.

“  
***Kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) interactions are culturally significant for Māori. Having Māori representation and understanding within funding bodies is crucial for genuine engagement.***

# CONCLUSION

The engagement paradox between Māori musicians and NZ On Air highlights barriers deeply rooted in systemic and cultural differences rather than intentional exclusion. Addressing these challenges offers an opportunity to align NZ On Air's inclusivity goals with the lived realities of Māori artists, bridging gaps to foster a genuinely supportive and equitable environment.

While NZ On Air has made strides in Māori representation, quantitative successes alone cannot fully reflect the nuanced experiences of Māori musicians. Cultural misalignments, such as a focus on broadcast outcomes over community and collective impact, continue to hinder deeper engagement. For some, these systemic barriers have led to disengagement by choice—a conscious decision to uphold cultural integrity and sovereignty over navigating misaligned frameworks. Recognising and respecting these choices is essential to developing pathways that encourage authentic participation.

To overcome these challenges, solutions must prioritise cultural safety, representation, and accountability frameworks that honour Māori perspectives. By embedding tailored mentorship, training initiatives, and kaupapa Māori-led development programmes, NZ On Air can empower Māori artists and their support networks, nurturing both their artistic and cultural aspirations. Exploring dedicated funding rounds or adapting existing streams to better reflect Māori priorities could amplify these voices, ensuring fairer representation within Aotearoa's music industry.

This review envisions a future where Māori artists thrive, not only as contributors to a vibrant music scene but as guardians of Aotearoa's diverse heritage. Through genuine engagement, systemic alignment, and a commitment to cultural integrity—including addressing disengagement by choice—NZ On Air has the chance to create a funding model that truly reflects the richness and diversity of Aotearoa's music landscape. By taking these steps, we can aspire to a music industry that celebrates and uplifts all voices, honouring the unique stories and artistry of Māori musicians.

“  
***It's knowledge that actually, yes, I can apply. That this is for me, this is something that is open to me.***

# GLOSSARY

**AKO:** Reciprocal teaching and learning, recognising the value of knowledge exchange between teacher and learner.

**HAPORI:** Community; a group of people bound by shared interests, values, or geography.

**HUI:** A gathering or meeting, often used for consultation or discussion.

**KAIHAUTŪ:** Leader, navigator, or guide, typically someone providing cultural or strategic guidance.

**KAITIAKITANGA:** Guardianship and stewardship, particularly of the environment and cultural heritage, ensuring sustainability and preservation for future generations.

**KANOHI KI TE KANOHI:** Face-to-face interaction, highlighting the importance of personal engagement and direct communication in Māori culture.

**KAPA HAKA:** Traditional Māori performing arts, involving singing, dancing, and rhythmic movements, used to express cultural identity and pride.

**KAUPAPA MĀORI:** Māori approach, principles, or philosophy; Māori-led initiatives or methodologies that are grounded in Māori values, beliefs, and cultural practices.

**KŌAUAU:** A traditional Māori flute, usually made from bone or wood.

**KŌRERO:** Speech, narrative, conversation, or discussion; can refer to formal or informal spoken interaction.

**MANA MOTUHAKE:** Autonomy, self-determination, sovereignty, or independence; the ability for Māori to determine their own destiny.

**MANAAKITANGA:** Hospitality, kindness, generosity, care, and respect for others; central to Māori values of mutual support and relationship-building.

**MARAE:** A communal or sacred meeting ground, the heart of a Māori community, where formal gatherings, ceremonies, and hui are held.

**MĀTAURANGA:** Knowledge, wisdom, education, or understanding, particularly traditional Māori knowledge.

**MAURI:** Life force, vitality, or essence that is inherent in all living things.

**MOANA:** Ocean or sea, significant culturally and spiritually for Māori as a source of sustenance and connection.

**PĀKEHĀ:** Non-Māori, typically referring to New Zealanders of European descent.

**PONO:** Honesty, integrity, sincerity, truthfulness; essential to Māori relationships and dealings.

**PŪTĀTARA:** A traditional Māori trumpet, usually made from conch shell, used in ceremonial contexts.

**RAUTAKI MĀORI:** Māori strategy or approach; a strategic framework to address issues pertinent to Māori interests and development.

**TAONGA PUORO:** Traditional Māori musical instruments, encompassing a range of wind, string, and percussion instruments.

**TE AO MĀORI:** The Māori world or worldview, encompassing Māori values, traditions, and ways of being.

**TE REO MĀORI:** The Māori language, recognised as an official language of Aotearoa.

**TIKANGA MĀORI:** Māori customs, traditions, and cultural protocols guiding appropriate behavior and practices.

**WAIATA:** Song, chant, or musical composition, often used to convey stories, histories, and cultural teachings.

**WAIATA ANTHEMS:** A cultural initiative promoting popular songs recorded in te reo Māori, increasing the presence of Māori language in mainstream music.

**WAIATA TAWHITO:** Traditional Māori songs or chants passed down through generations, encapsulating historical and cultural knowledge.

**WAIKUA:** Spirit or spirituality, reflecting the interconnectedness of physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being.

**WHAKAPAPA:** Genealogy, ancestry, lineage, or connections between people, land, and history; foundational to Māori identity.

**WHĀNAU:** Extended family, including close community connections; integral to Māori identity and social structure.

**WHANAUNGATANGA:** relationship, kinship, sense of family connection - a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging.

**WHENUA:** Land, especially ancestral or tribal land, fundamental to Māori identity and well-being.

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