

Irirangi Te Motu  
**NZ On Air**

# 2025 Music Diversity Report



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JessB

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## Introduction

Irirangi Te Motu |NZ On Air is tasked with reflecting and developing New Zealand's identity and culture. To do this, we seek to ensure the content we fund is an authentic reflection of the audiences it serves. As a key funder of local music content, NZ On Air is in a unique position to be able to report trends within the local music sector. Previously, diversity within the music sector was reported as part of NZ On Air's wider Diversity Report. This is the fourth standalone NZ On Air Music Diversity Report.<sup>1</sup>

This is also the ninth year of data collection on diversity in music funding. Initially the report solely monitored gender balance, but as of 2020, our reporting was expanded to also monitor ethnicity, genre and regional representation of the applicants and recipients of NZ On Air music funding. Applicants were able to self-select options from the following diversity headings – Gender, Ethnicity, Hometown and Genre – and were able to select multiple options for all but the Genre heading.

On the following pages, we show a comparison across New Music Single and New Music Project funding between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The data for New Music Single and New Music Project was collected to the end of the 2024/2025 funding year.

Funding applicants were split into the following gender categories based on the self-selected gender of the creative forces (e.g. singers/writers) involved in each work:

- Female – female solo artist or all-female group
- Male – male solo artist or all-male group
- Gender diverse – those that identified as gender diverse
- Mixed – mixed gender groups
- Other category – those with identities not captured in the prior options
- Rather Not Say – those that selected 'Rather Not Say'

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<sup>1</sup> Links to the previous NZ On Air Diversity reports which contain data on Music Diversity from 2016-2020 can be found in the Addendum on page 20

Applicants were able to select any number of ethnicities that best represented their backgrounds and/or identities. For the analysis in this report, where artists identified with more than one ethnicity, they were counted in each applicable category.<sup>2</sup> In line with guidance from Statistics NZ, we primarily report on the following ethnic categories:

- European<sup>3</sup>
- Māori
- Asian<sup>4</sup>
- Pacific

NZ On Air provides funding for a number of focused rounds and initiatives outside of New Music Single and New Music Project, such as New Music Pasifika (for artists of Pacific descent) or Waiata Takitahi (songs that contain 25%+ te reo Māori lyrical content) and, as of 2023, New Music Pan-Asian. This report primarily focuses on New Music Single and New Music Project funding, which make up the bulk of music funding. However, in recognition of NZ On Air's efforts to support diverse audiences and artists, we are also providing an overview of the results of these three focused funding streams.

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<sup>2</sup> This means that percentages will exceed 100 but it is necessary to accurately represent artists with two or more ethnicities

<sup>3</sup> Includes NZ European

<sup>4</sup> Includes Pan-Asian ethnicities

## Executive Summary

In 2024/25, **152** New Music Single (NMS) songs were funded out of **958** applications, a success rate of 16%, slightly higher than the 15% success rate of the previous year but lower than the success rates in 2023/23 (17%) and 2021/22 (19%). This trend exhibits the over-subscription of the fund and the ongoing need for funding.

New Music Project (NMP)<sup>5</sup> rounds received a total of **61** applications of which **34** were successful. This a success rate of 56% which is 10 points lower than the previous year (64%) and demonstrates the increasing demand for NMP funding.

### **New Music Single key findings**

- **Overall, NMS has closer gender parity than NMP.** This year, female solo artists received more NMS funding than male solo artists, but total male artists (including male groups) received more NMS funding than total female artists (including female groups).
- **Artists from European, Māori and Pacific backgrounds were well represented**, with the latter two exceeding their population benchmarks.
  - Artists who identified European as one of their ethnic backgrounds received 63% of NMS funding.
  - Artists who identified Māori as one of their ethnic backgrounds received 30% of NMS funding.
  - Artists who identified Pacific as one of their ethnic backgrounds received 17% of NMS funding.
- **Artists from Asian backgrounds received the largest percentage of NMS funding to date, at 13%.** However, this is still below their population benchmark of 17%.
- Alternative/Indie continues to be the most popular genre, representing one third of funded NMS songs.

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<sup>5</sup> NMP is designed for artists with a track record of creating music for a pre-existing audience and its eligibility criteria reflects this. For more information, please visit the [Music](#) section on our website

### **New Music Project key findings**

- **Male artists continue to outnumber female artists in application numbers, and consequently, funded projects:**
  - Female artists made up 23% of applicants and received 32% of the funding.
  - Male artists made up 63% of applicants and received 56% of the funding.
- **Artists from European and Pacific backgrounds were proportionately represented:**
  - Artists who identified European as one of their ethnic backgrounds made up 59% of funded applicants.
  - Artists who identified Pacific as one of their ethnic backgrounds received 12% of the funding.
- **Artists from Māori backgrounds had an increase in representation:**
  - Artists who identified Māori as one of their ethnic backgrounds received 42% of NMP funding, doubling the share they received in the previous year.
- **Artists from Asian backgrounds saw the lowest representation in three years**, submitting 2% of applications, none of which received funding.
- **Wellington produced the lowest percentage of funded artists in three years, with only 12% of Wellington-grown artists receiving NMP pūtea.**

### ***Focused Rounds***

#### **Waiata Takitahi (WT)**

- Waiata Takitahi received 25 applications of which **14** were funded, a success rate of 56%. This rate is slightly lower than the previous year, where 16 songs were funded out of 27 applications.
- Mixed gender groups saw a large increase in funding, providing 28% of applications and receiving 36% of the pūtea.



- **Fewer female artists applied for and received Waiata Takitahi funding in 2024/25.** Female artists provided 28% of applications and were awarded 14% of the funding, compared to the previous year where they submitted 33% of applications and received 38% of the pūtea. There were no female group applicants in 2024/25.
- **100% of successful artists identified Māori as one of their ethnic backgrounds.**

#### **New Music Pasifika (NMPasifika)**

- We ran one NMPasifika round in 2024/25, receiving 77 applications of which **20** were successful. **This is a success rate of 29%, down from the prior year's rate of 35%, and exhibits the high demand for NMPasifika funding.**
- Artists from Samoan and Samoan-mixed backgrounds continued to submit (69%) and receive (60%) the highest share of funding.
- There was closer gender parity in 2024/25 than the previous year. Solo male artists received 40% of the funding and solo female artists received 45%.

#### **New Music Pan-Asian (NMPA)**

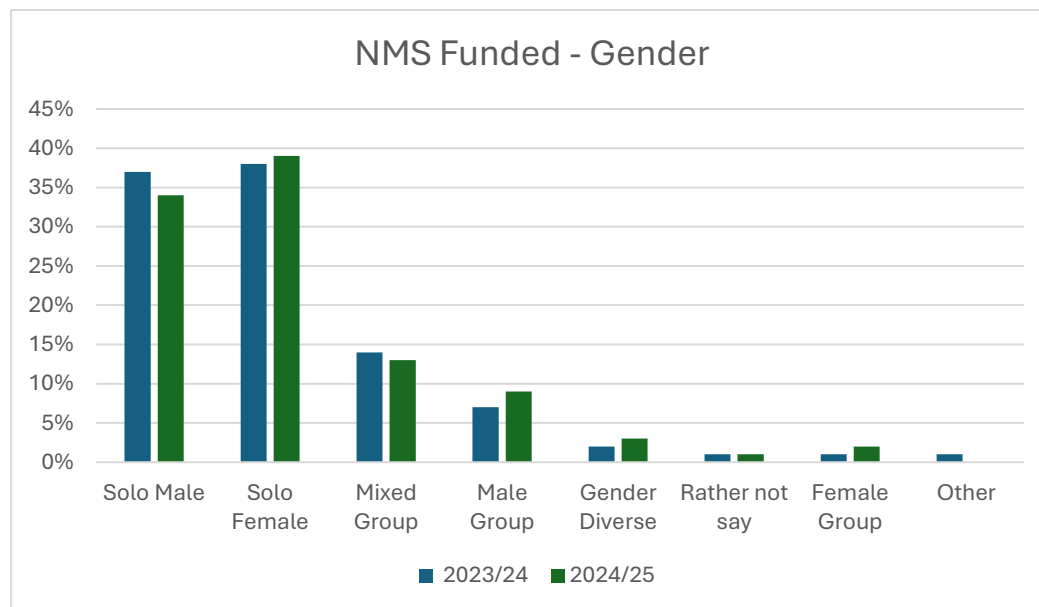
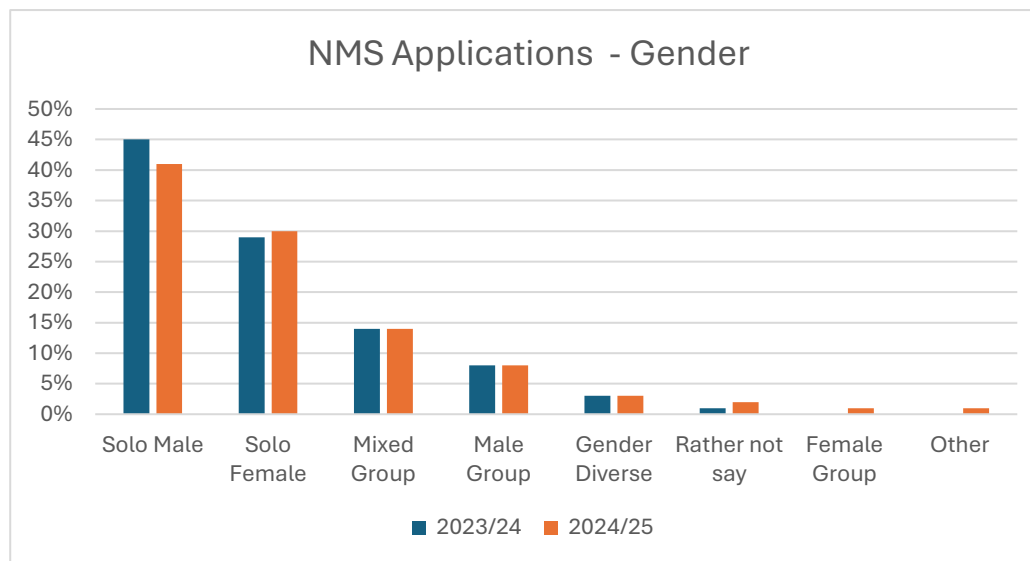
- NMPA received 65 applications of which **20** were funded. This is a success rate of 31%, same as the previous year, representing the ongoing demand for NMPA funding.
  - **22 Pan-Asian ethnicities were represented.**
  - **Artists from Filipino backgrounds received the single largest share of funding (30%) tripling their representation from the previous year (10%).**
  - Gender parity remains an issue. This year, male artists received 60% of the funding, female artists received 30% and gender diverse artists received 10%.
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- In each of the three Focused Rounds, more than half of all funded artists identified Auckland as their hometown.

## New Music Single – Applications vs Funded (Gender)

In 2024/25, **152** New Music Single (NMS) songs were funded out of **958** applications, a success rate of 16%, slightly higher than the 15% success rate of the previous year, but lower than the success rates in 2023/23 (17%) and 2021/22 (19%).

- For the second year in a row, female solo artists received more NMS funding than male solo artists. Solo females were awarded 39% of the pūtea and solo males artists received 34%, whereas the split in 2023/24 was 38% and 37% respectively. Solo female artists submitted 31% of applications, giving them a success rate of 20%, seven points above the success rate of solo male artists (13%).
- Despite solo female artists receiving a slightly larger share of NMS pūtea, total male artists (including male groups) received more NMS funding than total female artists (including female groups). This is because male-only groups received 9% of the funds (based on 8% of applications) and female-only groups received 2% (based on 1% of applications).
- Total male artists (including male groups) applied for 49% of NMS funding and received 43%, a combined success rate of 14%, the same as their success rate in the previous year.
- Total female artists (including female groups) applied for 31% of NMS funding and were awarded 41%, a combined success rate of 21%, a one percent increase on 2023/24.
- Mixed groups received 13% of the funding based on submitting 14% of applications. In the previous year, they received 14% of NMS funding.
- Gender diverse artists received a proportional amount of pūtea, applying for and receiving 3% of the funding, a one-point increase from 2023/24. Artists who selected 'rather not say' submitted 2% of applications and received 1% of funding.





## New Music Single – Applications vs Funded (Ethnicity) <sup>6</sup>

- 78% of applications came from artists who identified European as one of their ethnic backgrounds, and they received 63% of NMS funding.<sup>7</sup> This is roughly in line with the percentage of New Zealanders identified as European (68%) in the 2023 Census.<sup>8</sup> Artists who solely identified as European submitted 46% of applications (down marginally from 47% the prior year) and received the largest share of funding at 36%. However, this is a decrease of 6% from the previous year.
- Overall, artists who identified Māori as one of their ethnic backgrounds submitted 26% of applications and received 30% of NMS funding, an increase of 6% from the previous year. This exceeds the population benchmark for Māori which is listed as 18%.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2024/25, Māori-only artists (5%), Māori-European artists (16%), and Māori-other artists (5%) submitted a combined 26% of applications and received a combined 30% of NMS funding, with 8% going to Māori-only artists, 18% to Māori-European artists, and 4% to Māori-other artists. *Please note, these numbers do not include data from Waiata Takitahi, a funding round for bilingual te reo Māori lyric tracks.*
- Artists who identified Pacific as one of their ethnic backgrounds submitted 11% of applications and received 17% of the pūtea, the highest percentage to date. This is almost double the Census population benchmark for Pacific Peoples which is 9%.<sup>10</sup> Pacific-only artists provided 5% of applications and received 9% (equal to the previous year) with Pacific-European (4%) and Pacific-Māori (3%) receiving the next largest shares. *These numbers are not inclusive of data from the New Music Pasifika funding stream, which is a separate initiative open to artists from Pacific backgrounds.*

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<sup>6</sup> Respondents were able to select multiple ethnicities. For example, an artist or applicant who selected Māori and European is defined as either a) a single person who feels they whakapapa (or identify) as both Māori and Pakeha, or b) is an artist body that contains multiple members, some of whom whakapapa Māori and some of whom whakapapa Pakeha

<sup>7</sup> This includes anyone who identified as having European heritage, including NZ European

<sup>8</sup> [Stats NZ](#)

<sup>9</sup> As above

<sup>10</sup> As above

- Artists who identified Asian as one of their ethnic backgrounds provided 11% of NMS applications and received 13% of the funding, the largest share for Asian artists in the NMS category to date and an increase on last year's figure of 8%. This figure remains less than the population benchmark for Asian New Zealanders which is 17%.<sup>11</sup> *These numbers do not include data from New Music Pan-Asian, a funding stream aimed at increasing the quality and quantity of music for Pan-Asian New Zealanders.*

## New Music Single – Applications vs Funded (Primary Genre)

- Alternative/Indie continues to be the most popular genre, representing one third of funded NMS songs and 38% of applications. This is a 1% increase from 2023/24 where Alternative/Indie received 29% of the funding.
- Pop was the second most popular genre for the second year in a row, representing 23% of funded songs and 20% of applications. This is a small decrease from 2023/24, where Pop received 26% of the funding.
- Hip Hop and RnB represented 18% of successful applications (based on 14% of the submissions) which is marginally lower than the 19% it received in 2023/24.
- Rock/Metal received 9% of NMS pūtea (up from 8% the previous year) and Folk/Country received 5% (equal to the previous year) while Dance/Electro received 7% (down from 10% the previous year).
- Reggae/Roots represented 8% of funded songs, almost tripling its figure from 2023/24 (3%). It also had the highest success rate (41%).

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<sup>11</sup> [Stats NZ](#)

## New Music Single – Applications vs Funded (Regional Representation)<sup>12</sup>

- Auckland continues to produce the highest number of artists with NMS funding. This year, Auckland-grown artists submitted 39% of applications and received 45% of the pūtea. These numbers are on par with 2023/24, where Auckland provided 37% of applicants who were awarded 46% of funding.
- The Canterbury and Wellington regions each produced 12% of NMS funded artists, though artists originally from Canterbury applied in higher numbers (16%) than artists originally from Wellington (14%). In 2023/24, Canterbury-grown artists received 14% of funding and Wellington-grown artists received 11%.
- The next most represented regions were Otago (10% of recipients), Bay of Plenty (4%), and Waikato (3%).

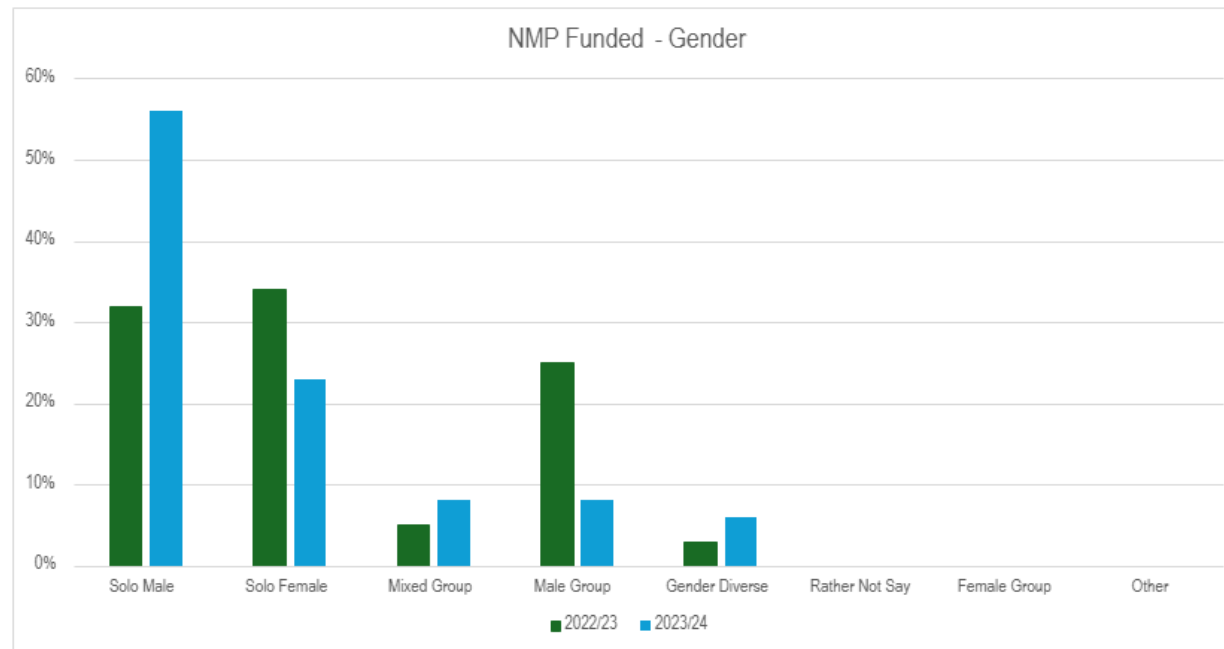
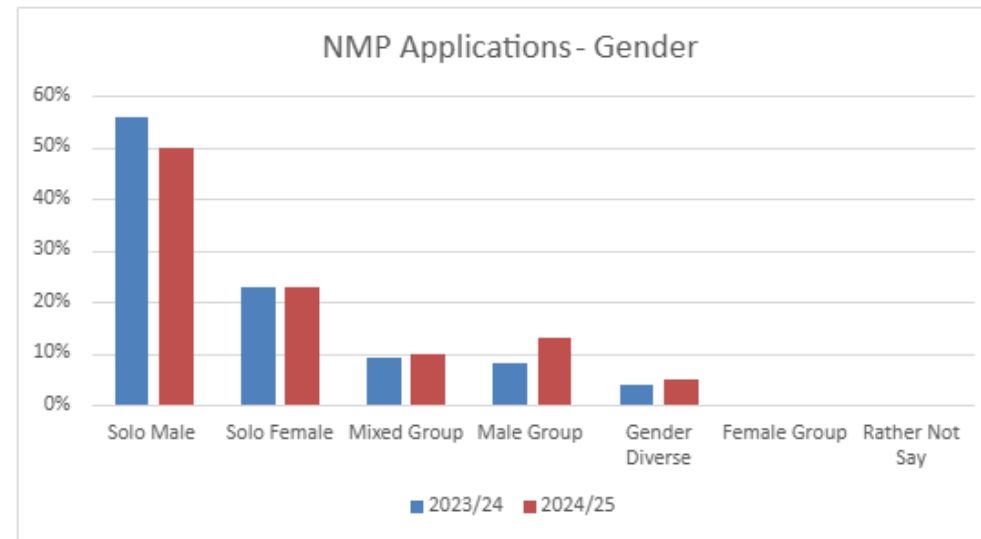
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<sup>12</sup> Regional representation refers to an artist's 'hometown', their region of birth and/or origin, rather than their current geographic base

## New Music Project (NMP) – Applications vs Funded (Gender)

New Music Project rounds received a total of **61** applications of which **34** were successful. This a success rate of 56% which is 10 points lower than the previous year (64%) and demonstrates the high demand for NMP funding.

- For the second year in a row, solo female artists submitted 23% of NMP applications and were awarded 32% of the funding. Although this result is an increase on the previous year (23%), it is lower than the result in 2022/23 (34%) and 2021/22 (39%). There were no applications from female groups.
- Solo male artists saw decreases in both application numbers (50%) and funded projects (47%) compared to the previous year, where they applied for 56% of applications and received 54% of the pūtea. Male groups received an additional 9% of the funding, bringing total male representation to 56%, less than 2023/24's combined result (62%).
- Mixed groups received the remaining 12% of NMP funding, an increase from 2023/24 (8%) and 2022/23 (5%). Gender diverse artists made up 5% of submissions but did not receive funding, a decrease from 6% on the previous year.



## New Music Project – Applications vs Funded (Ethnicity)

- Artists who selected European as one of their ethnic backgrounds continue to be well represented, making up 61% of submissions and 59% of funded applicants. However, there was a decrease in the number of applications (40%) and the percentage of funding (38%) for artists from European-only backgrounds compared to the prior year, where they submitted 49% of applications and received 56% of the pūtea.
- Artists from Māori-only backgrounds saw increases in the application and funding categories, providing 16% of applications and being awarded 24% of the pūtea. This makes them the second-most successful single ethnic group. Artists from Māori-mixed backgrounds received 18%, bringing overall Māori representation to 42%. This is more than double the share that Māori artists received in 2023/24 (20%).
- Artists from Asian Backgrounds had the lowest NMP representation in three years, submitting 2% of the applications, none of which received funding. This result is a decrease from 2023/24 and 2022/23 where they received 4% and 5% of the funding respectively.
- Artists from Pacific-only backgrounds saw a large increase in NMP funding, receiving 12% of the pūtea compared to 2% in 2023/24. They also submitted more applications (8%) than the previous year (2023/24). When combined with the funding given to Pacific-mixed artists (a further 12%), the overall share for Pacific artists rises to 24%, an eight-point increase over the previous year.
- The remaining funding went to artists from African backgrounds (3%), a drop from the 8% funding they received in 2023/24.



## New Music Project – Applications vs Funded (Primary Genre)

- Alternative/Indie remained the most awarded genre, representing 29% of funded projects. This figure is, however, a notable decrease of 19% from the previous year, where it received 46% of funding.
- Pop was the second most-awarded genre with 24% of NMP funding, in keeping with its share of 25% in 2023/24.
- Hip Hop and RnB projects received the third largest share of funding at 18%. This is a decline of 5% from the previous year.
- Reggae/Roots saw a statistically significant increase in funding, representing 12% of successful projects, up from 0% in 2023/24.
- Rock/Metal continued to see a steady increase in representation, receiving 9% of the funding, up from 2% in 2023/24 and 0% in 2022/23.
- The remaining pūtea was split between Dance/Electro (6%) and Folk/Country (3%).

## New Music Project – Applications vs Funded (Regional Representation)

- Auckland continued to produce the highest portion of NMP-funded artists at 53%. This is an increase from the two previous years, where Auckland-grown artists received 35% of the funding in 2023/24 and 44% of the funding in 2022/23.
- Wellington produced the lowest percentage of funded artists in three years, with only 12% of Wellington-grown artists receiving NMP pūtea. This is a decline of 5% from 2023/24 and 7% from 2022/23.
- Artists originally from Raglan received 6% of the total spend, while the remainder of the funding went to artists originally from Hamilton, Hokianga, Katikati, Lyttelton, Masterton, Napier, Opotiki, Rotorua, Tūrangi, and Wānaka, all of whom received 3%.

## Focused Rounds - Waiata Takitahi, New Music Pasifika, and New Music Pan-Asian<sup>13</sup>

### Waiata Takitahi (WT)

- Waiata Takitahi received 25 applications of which **14** were funded, a success rate of 56%. This rate is slightly lower than the previous year, where 16 songs were funded out of 27 applications.
- Male artists submitted 36% of applications and received 36% of the pūtea, a success rate of 56%. In 2023/24, male artists received 38% of the funding.
- Mixed gender groups saw a large increase in funding, providing 28% of applications and receiving 36% of the pūtea, a success rate of 71%. This result is 30 points higher than 2023/24, where mixed gender groups received a 6% share of the funding.
- Fewer female artists applied for and received Waiata Takitahi funding in 2024/25. Female artists provided 28% of applications and were awarded 14% of the funding, compared to the previous year where they submitted 33% of applications and received 38% of the pūtea. Furthermore, there were no female group applicants in 2024/25.
- The remaining pūtea was split between artists who selected 'other' (7%) and all male groups (7%), who saw a 12% decrease from 2023/24.
- 100% of successful artists identified Māori as one of their ethnic backgrounds, a four-point increase on the previous year. Artists who identified Māori as their only ethnic background received 43% of the funding, down from 56% in 2023/24. Artists with Māori-European heritage received the next largest share at 36%, up from 25% in 2023/24.
- Artists from Māori and Pacific backgrounds received 14%, more than twice as much funding as 2023/24, and artists from Māori-European- African ethnicities were awarded 7% of funding, up from 0% in the previous year.

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<sup>13</sup> In 2023/24, Waiata Takitahi, New Music Pasifika and New Music Pan-Asian each ran for one round. New Music Pan-Asian, originally intended as a one-off in 2022/23, has become a permanent focused round. New Music Pasifika had two rounds in 2022/23 and two rounds in 2023/24, but one round in 2024/25

- Hip Hop and RnB represented 43% of funded songs, more than tripling its figure from 2023/24 (13%). Pop songs received 29% of the funding, down from 38% in the previous year. Alternative/Indie and Reggae/Roots both represented 14% of funded songs, while no Rock/Metal, Dance/Electro and Folk/Country applications were successful this year.

### **New Music Pasifika (NMPasifika)**

- NMPasifika ran one round in 2024/25, receiving 77 applications of which **20** were successful. This is a success rate of 29%, down from the prior year's rate of 35%, and exhibits the high demand for NMPasifika funding.
- Artists from Samoan (35%) and Samoan-mixed heritage (25%) made up a combined 60% of recipients, down slightly from the previous year (66%). They submitted 69% of applications.
- Artists from Tongan backgrounds made up 15% of recipients, with the remaining pūtea going to applicants from Cook Islands, Fijian, Niuean, Tokelauan and Vanuatuan backgrounds.
- There was closer gender parity between solo male and solo female artists. Solo male artists accounted for 62% of submissions (a marginal drop from 63% in 2023/24) and received 40% of the funding (down from 51% in 2023/24).
- Solo female artists submitted 27% of applications (up from 21% in 2023/24) and were awarded 45% of the funding (up from 31% in 2023/24). The remaining funding (15%) went to mixed groups.
- Hip Hop and RnB remained the most funded genre (40%), followed by Pop (25%), Alternative/Indie (15%), Reggae/Roots (10%), Dance/Electronic (5%) and Folk/Country (5%).
- 50% of funded artists cited Auckland as their hometown, followed by Wellington (20%) and Hamilton (10%) as the only other regions to break 10%.

## New Music Pan-Asian (NMPA)

- NMPA received 65 applications of which **20** were funded. This is a success rate of 31%, same as the previous year, representing the ongoing demand for NMPA funding.
- 22 Pan-Asian ethnicities were represented amongst applicants.
- Artists from Filipino backgrounds received the single largest share of funding (30%), tripling their representation from the previous year (10%). The only other group to receive more than 10% of the funding were artists from Chinese backgrounds, who were awarded 15% (down from 30% in 2023/24). The rest of the pūtea was shared between artists from Bangladeshi, Korean, Cambodian, Hong Kong, Indian, Indonesian, Kurdish, Malaysian, Singaporean, Thai and Vietnamese backgrounds.
- There were a higher number of male applicants (45%) than female applicants (38%) and male artists consequently received slightly more than half (55%) of the funding. This is a large increase from 2023/24, where they received 20%.
- Female artists were granted a 30% share, down significantly from the 70% share they received the previous year.
- Gender diverse artists were given 10% of the funding (double the share in 2023/24) and male groups received the remaining 5% of the NMPA pūtea.
- The two most successful genres were Pop (30%) and Hip Hop and RnB (30%), followed by Alternative/Indie (15%), Rock/Metal (15%) and Dance/Electronic (10%).
- 65% of NMPA-awarded artists cited Auckland as their hometown, which aligns with the fact that one-third of Auckland's population identifies as Asian.<sup>14</sup>
- Wellington was the only other region with more than 10% representation.

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<sup>14</sup> [Stats NZ](#)

## Methodology

For the NZ On Air Music Diversity report, all applicants self-selected options under the following diversity headings – Gender, Ethnicity, Hometown and Genre. Applicants were able to select multiple options for all but the Genre heading.

Prior to 2020/21, the report offered only Male, Female and Mixed Gender options for Gender diversity. For the Mixed Gender option, however, this incorporated all artists/groups who had mixed gender group members, which included gender diverse artists. From 2020/21, to provide a more accurate picture, Gender Diverse artists were brought out into a separate Gender category.

For ethnicity, where an artist or applicant identified with more than one ethnicity, they were counted in each applicable group.

Regional representation refers to an artist's 'hometown', their region of birth and/or origin, rather than their current geographic base.

### **Addendum**

For details on music diversity between 2016 and 2020, the past reports (where music diversity was included within the wider NZ On Air Diversity Report) can be accessed at the links below:

[Diversity Report 2020](#)

[Diversity Report 2019](#)

[Diversity Report 2018](#)