



Level 2
119 Ghuznee Street
P O Box 9744
Wellington 6141
New Zealand

info@nzonair.govt.nz
www.nzonair.govt.nz

Tel: 04 382 9524
Fax: 04 382 9546

4 August 2026

Tēnā koe [REDACTED],

Official Information request and response

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act ("OIA") dated 22 June 2026.

You have requested:

1. *NZME's original Open Justice reporting application – specifically the Open Justice application which was funded in Round 2 of the Public Interest Journalism Fund approved in September 2021.*
2. *NZ On Air's assessment of competing applications (if any) – specifically the Board Paper approved in September 2021 where the Open Justice application was considered with three other applications.*
3. *The funding agreement and KPIs.*
4. *Annual performance reports showing:*
 - a. *reporter locations,*
 - b. *story volumes,*
 - c. *syndication uptake,*
 - d. *audience reach.*
5. *Any correspondence or material discussing why NZME was chosen and subsequent evaluation of the Open Justice reporting scheme.*

I have attached the requested information that we are able to release:

1. Please find attached the Open Justice application form from Round 2 of the Public Interest Journalism Fund. We have redacted personal information under section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons. We are further withholding budget details and the proposal in full under section 9(2)(b)(ii) as Open Justice is an ongoing scheme and disclosure would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied this information.
2. Please find attached the Board paper approved in September 2021 where Open Justice was considered with three other applications. We have redacted personal information and salary figures under section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons and information about the financial position of the applicants under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.
3. Please find attached the original funding agreement for Open Justice. We have made redactions under sections 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(b)(ii).

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4. Please see information on reporter locations and story volumes in the review of Local Democracy Reporting and Open Justice at 5. We have decided to withhold information relating to syndication uptake and audience reach under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982. This information is commercially sensitive, and its release would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the media organisations participating in the Open Justice scheme.

The Open Justice programme remains ongoing, and the requested information would reveal the performance, reach and uptake of content produced by participating organisations. Disclosure could provide competitors with commercially valuable insights into the effectiveness and audience engagement of those organisations.

We have considered the public interest in release under section 9(1) of the Act. While there is a public interest in accountability for public expenditure, NZ On Air considers that this interest is sufficiently met through the publication of funding information and the review of the programme's overall objectives and outcomes. The public interest does not outweigh the need to withhold the specific information requested.

5. In terms of subsequent evaluation reporting, we are able to provide the publicly available review of the Local Democracy Reporting and Open Justice schemes conducted by Dr Gavin Ellis. The purpose of this review was to determine how well each of the schemes achieved their stated purpose. This review is available on our website [here](#).

Correspondence and assessment materials in relation to the decisions made regarding Open Justice are withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i), which protects the effective conduct of public affairs through free and frank expression of opinions, on the basis that disclosure could chill candid future advice or discussion of assessors.

Once *Open Justice* is no longer an ongoing project, we will be happy to reconsider your request and may be in a position to release some of the information we have redacted or withheld. Please contact us again at that time with a new request.

For your information, funding provided by NZ On Air for all successful projects is [searchable](#) on our website. You can also [sign up](#) to receive our regular industry newsletter via our website.

You have the right to refer this response to the Ombudsman if you are dissatisfied with it. More information on how to do this is [here](#). NZ On Air proactively releases information in accordance with the Government's commitment to the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan. This includes publishing responses to requests for information under the OIA. Please note that this response (with your name removed) will be published on the NZ On Air website shortly and will remain on our website for 12 months.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Ngā manaakitanga,



Raewyn Rasch

HEAD OF OPERATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND CULTURE

KAIHAUTŪ NGĀ WHAKAHAERE, NGĀ RANGIPŪ MAHITAHĪ ME TE AHUREA

Documents:

1. Open Justice Funding Application
2. Board Paper
3. Funding Agreement
4. Gavin Ellis Report