

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated August 2026

How much reo Māori is needed and how will it be measured?

Your song should contain more than 25% reo Māori in your sung word count. That means for every 100 words you sing, at least 25 of them are Māori. It is preferable that te reo Māori appears in sentences, rather than as scattered kupu throughout the lyric.

Do I have to be Māori or of Māori descent?

No, this fund is open to artists of all backgrounds.

What is a Poutiaki Reo?

A Poutiaki Reo is someone with knowledge, skill and craft in te reo Māori for waiata. If you're already competent in te reo Māori, a collaborator might be a tuakana or peer who will add confidence to your process and craft.

Can I submit a cover or a released waiata to be translated into te reo Māori for re-release?

You must submit an original, unreleased waiata. It cannot be a cover, remix or remake, and it cannot be a waiata you wish to translate into te reo Māori for re-release.

How much is a Waiata Takitahi funding grant?

Waiata Takitahi grants will be available up to \$14,000 (plus GST, if registered). A \$1,000 mandatory Artist Creation Fee (ACF) for internal creative services will be added to the budget to bring the funding grant total up to \$15,000.

The funding can be used towards a professional release-ready recording of the waiata; video content and other visual collateral to assist with its release, along with promotion, publicity and marketing.

We expect some of the funding will be spent on a Poutiaki Reo to ensure quality use of te reo Māori in the waiata.

Do I have to co-invest or contribute funds?

You are not required to co-invest in a Waiata Takitahi grant. However, we do expect you to invest resources into the release of your funded waiata where possible, to give it the very best chance of cutting through and finding an audience.

What do I need before I apply?

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

Waiata Takitahi applicants will need to have achieved at least **5 of the 25 criteria** options to proceed to the song application stage. The full detailed criteria list can be found in the pages below.

Where can I apply?

Waiata Takitahi applications will only be accepted online via the NZ On Air [NewMusicSingle](http://newmusicsingle.nzonair.govt.nz) application portal. In a browser, type: <http://newmusicsingle.nzonair.govt.nz>

Please look for the specific Waiata Takitahi badge to click and begin your application.

If this is your first time applying to the NZ On Air NewMusicSingle portal, you will just need to sign up first with an email and password.

Will there be help from a te reo Māori translator?

The use of te reo Māori in the song must be supported by a Poutiaki Reo. They will play an integral part in your project to ensure the kupu Māori lyric will land the right way.

For applicants who cannot confirm a Poutiaki Reo before the application deadline, there will be an opportunity to be matched with a suitable advisor via Te Māngai Pāho.

For any queries, contact the NZ On Air Music team at musicteam@nzonair.govt.nz

Te Reo Māori

- I have recorded and digitally released a song in te reo Māori
Audio streaming site examples include Spotify, Apple Music, Soundcloud, You Tube Music, Bandcamp, etc.
- I am capable of and confident to write lyrics in te reo Māori.
- I have a Poutiaki Reo or reo collaborator who will support the reo Māori writing process.

Whakaminenga ā-Ipurangi | Online Audience

- I have more than 1,000 followers on a single social media page.
Social media platform examples include Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, etc.
- I currently have 5,000 monthly listeners on Spotify.
This must be an up-to-date figure i.e. within the past 2 months.
- I currently have 2,000 followers on Spotify.
This must be an up-to-date figure i.e. within the past 2 months.
- I have had a single song reach 5,000 streams on a single music platform.
Audio streaming site examples include Spotify, Apple Music, Soundcloud, YouTube Music, Bandcamp, etc.
- I have had a single music video reach 2,000 plays on a single platform.
Video streaming site examples include You Tube, Vimeo, Vevo, Facebook, etc.

Whakapāhotanga Waiata | Broadcast Track Record

- I have had a song playlisted on a NZ radio station.
This must be a song which has been in regular multi-play rotation on the station (e.g. A-rotate, B-rotate, C-rotate etc.) – not one-off ‘spot’ plays. Can include NZ On Air or Te Māngai Pāho-sponsored Music Features where your song was played on rotate multiple times in that feature.
- I have had a song appear on one of the weekly Radioscope airplay charts.
These charts include the Radioscope All Airplay Top 100, Pop Top 40, Rock Top 40, Alt Top 40, Urban Top 40, Dance Top 40, Adult Top 40, NZ Top 40, Te Reo Māori Top 20 or Most Added Top 40.
- I have featured on a live-to-air performance on a NZ radio station or digital platform.
This can include a live-to-air performance on a radio station or network like RNZ, a student radio station etc., or a live stream performance on a New Zealand-based music or entertainment online platform excluding your own social media channels.

Whakaaturanga Mataora | Live Performance Track Record

- More than 100 members of the public paid to attend a show I was advertised to play.
- I have completed a headline tour of at least three New Zealand centres.
‘Headline’ means that your act was the main performer at the event, not a support act.
- I have performed at least 10 shows in New Zealand in a calendar year.

Ētahi Atu Tūāpapa Whakaputanga Pāpāho | Other Media, Platform Editorial

- I have had a song added to a platform-curated playlist.
This must be official platform curation and does not include user or personal playlists, or NZ On Air Music or Te Māngai Pāho playlists.
- I have featured in a music or entertainment publication (online or print).
This can include a feature article and/or music video feature on a NZ music or entertainment publication like Confine or print examples such as NZ Musician, Undertheradar, 13th Floor, Sniffers, The Spinoff, Stuff, Coup de Main, muzic.net.nz.
- I have had a music video premiere on a significant New Zealand or international music or entertainment online platform.
This must be a specific video premiere which was exclusive to that platform for initial release. NZ or overseas-based music or entertainment online publication examples include any of the examples in questions 2 and 3 above.

Ngā Take Pākihi | Business Time

- I am signed to a third-party record label with a track record of releasing new music in New Zealand.
A third-party record label is a company with a track record of releasing new music in New Zealand that is not owned or operated by the artist.
- I have a third-party publishing deal with an organisation that has a track record of promoting compositions for commercial use.
A third-party publishing deal is an agreement with an organisation that has a track record of promoting compositions for commercial use e.g. film syncs and collecting licensing royalties on behalf of the composers. This could be part of a record label or an independent organisation, but it cannot be owned or operated by the artist. It also excludes APRA AMCOS.
- I have a third-party management deal with a company or manager that has a track record of overseeing business activities of musicians, producers and songwriters.
A third-party management deal is an agreement with a company or individual artist manager with a track record of overseeing the business activities of musicians, producers and songwriters. The manager cannot be the artist applicant.
- I have a distribution arrangement in place with a company that is responsible for distributing songs to streaming platforms.
A distributor is a company that is responsible for selling music in stores and online and includes distributing songs to streaming platforms. This could be part of a record label or an independent organisation operating in New Zealand, or an online service.

Ngā Whakawhiwhinga me ngā Whakamiha | Awards & Other Recognition

- I have been a finalist for a major national music award.
Major national music awards are awarded by: Aotearoa Music Awards, APRA Silver Scrolls, Waiata Māori Music Awards, Pacific Music Awards, Student Radio Network Awards.
- I have been a national finalist in Smokefree Rockquest or Smokefree Tangata Beats.
This must have been a national final. Regional finals are excluded.
- I have had a waiata or project feature in a [Recorded Music NZ Top 20 Single or Album chart](#).
These charts incorporate streaming, airplay and physical sales. State the waiata, chart, and position, and month and year for verification. Check out: <https://nztop40.co.nz/> for this info.
- I have previously received a music grant from a New Zealand public funding agency like Creative NZ, NZ Music Commission, Te Māngai Pāho or NZ On Air.