

PUBLIC INTEREST JOURNALISM FUND: PROJECTS

FUNDING DECISIONS

RECOMMENDATION

That the Staff Investment Committee **approves** up to:

- **\$604,520** to Very Nice Productions for *Local Focus 2022/23*, 1,440' on The NZ Herald, [REDACTED]
- **\$800,000** to Cinco Cine for *t2T Teina 2 Tuākana*, 60 x 5' video news bulletins for Whakaata Māori, [REDACTED]
- \$39,380 to Metro for *Uneasy Money: How We Pay for Art*, 4 x 4,000-word feature articles, [REDACTED]
- \$160,187 to The Spinoff for *Local Elections 2022*, 55 x 1000-word articles and 2 x 30' *Gone By Lunchtime* podcast specials.
- **\$210,000** to Go Global for *Separated*, 5 x 10' videos and 5 x 2,000-word articles, [REDACTED]
- \$101,897 to Apna for *Mental Health in Ethnic Communities*, 6 x 20' podcast episodes, [REDACTED]
- \$695,000 to Allied Press for *The South Today*, 960 x 1-3' video news clips and 234 x 10' news bulletins.

and **declines**:

[REDACTED]

7 applications recommended for total funding of up to \$2,610,984

BACKGROUND

1. In January 2021 Cabinet agreed to draw down \$55 million over three years (2021 - 2023) from the tagged contingency set aside by Cabinet for broadcasting initiatives. This funding is administered by NZ On Air to support the production of public interest journalism including Māori and Iwi journalism that is relevant to and valued by New Zealanders.
2. [General Guidelines for the PIJF](#) were published in April 2021. The principles set out in [the Cabinet paper](#) have informed the design of the Public Interest Journalism Fund (PIJF). NZ On Air collaborated with Te Māngai Pāho on the design and delivery of the fund. The [General Guidelines](#) were updated in March 2022.
3. The PIJF supports journalistic capability across three funding pillars: Projects, Roles and Industry Development.

OVERVIEW

4. The fourth round of the PIJF sought applications across all three pillars of the fund. NZ On Air earmarked \$5m for this funding round and received 39 applications with a total funding request of \$11,292,212.
5. Building on funding already distributed in the previous three rounds, the [Round 4 criteria](#) focused on funding that supports the sustainability, capability and capacity of public interest journalism in Aotearoa. Applicants were advised that given the number of roles funded in Round 2 and feedback from industry around shortages in the journalism workforce, Round 4 would prioritise Industry Development and projects that deliver to long term outcomes or support current sector shortfalls and underserved audiences.
6. Given the constrained pūtea, prior allocations and expected demand, media entities were able to make separate applications under each of the three pillars but the total number of proposals per applicant were limited to:
 - a. 1 Industry Development application
 - b. 1 Project application
 - c. Maximum of 2 Roles (across both Targeted and Content Creation role categories).
7. This SIC paper assesses Projects with recommended funding of up to \$2,610,984 from a total ask of \$6,503,139.

- [REDACTED]
9. The assessment panel for Round 4 included:

- a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. **Raewyn Rasch (Ngāi Tahu)** - NZ On Air Head of Journalism. Former General Manager Māori and Pacific programmes at TVNZ, executive producer of *Seven Sharp*, producer of *Fair Go* and *Marae Investigates*, TV and radio journalist.
 - e. **Gabriel Thomas**, Journalism Manager, NZ On Air. Former executive producer of *The Nation* and *Firstline*, producer *Newshub Live at 6*.
 - f. **Dr Fairooz Samy**, Journalism Funding Advisor, NZ On Air. Recently graduated from Victoria University of Wellington with a PhD in Media Studies.
- [REDACTED]

GENERAL ASSESSMENT & STAFF OPINION

Local Focus 2022-23

Very Nice Productions

Requested \$630,000

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

- 12. A regional video news project for Bay of Plenty, Rotorua, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa and Whanganui, with accompanying text articles.

General Assessment

- 13. *Local Focus 2022-23* is proposing to continue its regional video news project for 52 weeks from 12 September 2022 to 10 September 2023 producing 1,440 minutes completed video (3 parts approx) including captions with articles and images. This averages to 1.5 stories a week per reporter.
- 14. *Local Focus* was first funded as a Regional Media project by NZ On Air in 2016 to provide regional video content following the demise of regional television and has been funded in each subsequent year, switching to the PIJF in 2021. Last year the project added reporters in Gisborne and Wairarapa bringing their contingent to six. Reporters are based in regions operating as multi-skilled one-person-crews with support from two producers and a part time sub-editor.
- 15. Video and articles are published on the NZ Herald website and NZME social media along with the Gisborne Herald and Wairarapa Times-Age. Local Focus text articles also appear in the Bay of Plenty Times, Rotorua Daily Post, Gisborne Herald, Hawke’s Bay Today, and Whanganui Chronical.
- 16. *Local Focus* says it has increased its Māori content from 17% in its first five years rising to 19% so far this year although it aims to get to 25%. It currently has two reporters of Māori descent, [REDACTED] along with producer [REDACTED]
- 17. *Local Focus* covers diverse and niche stories providing local video content to areas where network television rarely visits. The applicant points to important opportunities to cover the local body elections in October and the general election in 2023.

Staff Opinion

- 18. [REDACTED]
- 19. The budget for this proposal has increased by \$111,488.32 on the previous year. While the proposal does not provide justification for this increase, budget analysis by staff shows the applicant has chosen to incorporate the Wairarapa role, previously funded as a separate role in Round 2 of the PIJF into this contract. If funded - this will require an adjustment of the current Wairarapa role contract to ensure there is no overlap.
- 20. Once the Wairarapa role is accounted for, the proposed budget shows [REDACTED]

Released under the Official Information Act

21. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] A revised budget would be required prior to contracting.
22. The proposed budget also outlined an increase in travel budget of \$8,000. Staff sought clarification on this budget line and was told “[REDACTED] so we're hoping to hold an extra training get together in Auckland in the next year so the team can connect with the NZME newsroom and the team there. For some of the team, flights are the only practical way to get here.” Staff accepts this justification and believes this cost increase is a reasonable request.
23. The proposal notes the applicant has removed all CapEx from the budget across equipment and cars which will now be hired to the production. Staff queried if camera equipment purchased through NZ On Air funding could now be charged as hireage. Given the history of this project, and the requirement for the applicant to maintain and service the equipment, the \$12,000 to cover equipment vital to the project is acceptable.
24. [REDACTED] assured staff he will be able to lift the story output especially with the upcoming local body elections and meet the contracted level of content deliverables.
25. He goes to some lengths to explain the complicated nature of video journalism and the high quality of its content, however staff believes the output of approximately 1.5 x 3' video stories per week, per reporter, is low compared to other PIJF video projects and considering the straightforward format of *Local Focus* stories.
26. NZME makes no direct contribution to funding *Local Focus*, [REDACTED] stated, “We are happy to continue to support *Local Focus* - it plays an important role - under the NZ on Air funding agreement. We would not be able to support *Local Focus* if NZ on Air's funding stopped.”
27. On balance, assessors saw the value of *Local Focus* video content provision with one saying it “...is performing a valuable service to the regions for NZME readers. It also provides opportunities for employees based in the regions to develop a range of broadcast skills.”
28. The nature of video reporting has changed since 2016, as has the provision of local video journalism since the launch of the PIJF. The continuation of *Local Focus* will need to be rationalised moving forward post-the PIJF, and staff recommends that the production should be informed in the funding letter that funding may not be ongoing in the future.
29. In the meantime, this production offers a viable video news service to six underrepresented regions and given the importance of local and community reporting, staff believe it should continue to be supported under the PIJF. **Funding is recommended up to \$604,520** [REDACTED]

t2T Teina 2 Tuākana

Cinco Cine

Requested \$900,704

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

30. t2T is a pilot youth development programme between Cinco Cine, 15 NZ Schools, Whakaata Māori, Pacific Media Network (PMN) and NZME introducing tamariki and rangatahi to journalism as a viable career.

General Assessment

31. There are approximately 22,391 tamariki and rangatahi attending Te Kura Kaupapa Māori and mainstream schools in Aotearoa where 51% - 100% te reo Māori is spoken. There are 12,244 Pasifika tamariki and rangatahi attending schools in Aotearoa where a Pasifika language is the dominant language.
32. t2T seeks to provide a pipeline of Māori and Pacific youth into journalism through a programme that empowers three rangatahi reporters who will work with tamariki in schools introducing them to journalism by helping them make their own content. The proposal seeks to provide a pipeline to the PIJF funded Te Rito Journalism cadetship programme using an indigenous, inter-generational model. It will also provide news by, for, and about tamariki.
33. The programme will select three rangatahi cadets (tuākana) aged between 17- 19, two of whom are reo Māori speakers and one who is reo Moana. They will spend five weeks training with Māori journalism legend [REDACTED] before heading out to schools where they will pass on their skills on to 15 teina cadets aged between 8 -12. These teina cadets across 15 schools will create their own video stories. Over 20 weeks it is expected each school will be visited twice.
34. The video stories will be collated into 3 x 5' bulletins per week to be aired on Whakaata Māori, PMN and Stuff along with the Whare Kōrero app (iwi radio), Te Kura Kaupapa websites, a t2T YouTube channel, and Instagram. Written stories will be shared on NZME digital platform, Kāhu. Fulsome letters of support were provided from each of the stakeholder/platforms.
35. While social media and digital channels will be key, the applicant points out that linear broadcasting is also important as many Māori and Pacific communities have difficulty accessing digital platforms due to lack of reliable broadband in regional areas or the cost and access to internet. Content will be dropped into Te Ao news breaks on Whakaata Māori, along with the relevant PMN news breaks on their language channels.
36. PMN will support the Pacific tuākana and use audio tracks to create NiuFM tamariki news bulletins, PMN language shows and social media.
37. There are approximately 22,391 tamariki and rangatahi attending Te Kura Kaupapa Māori and mainstream schools in Aotearoa where 51% - 100% te reo Māori is spoken. There are 12,244 Pasifika tamariki and rangatahi attending schools in Aotearoa where a Pasifika language is the dominant language.
38. The applicant proposes five stages.
 - a. Programme consolidation and co-design with stakeholders
 - b. Recruitment of tuākana, rangatahi and training programme
 - c. Kura confirmation and pastoral care programme incl. an induction noho marae stay for students
 - d. Schedules and planning
 - e. Full production over 20 weeks

Staff Opinion

39. This is an ambitious project that aims to achieve two goals; to seed a vital pipeline of Māori and Pacific rangatahi into journalism and to provide indigenous language content to an underserved and hard to reach youth audience.
40. Staff notes that at a recent Māori Media Workforce wānanga, the issue of such a pipeline was discussed as critical to increasing Māori in the journalism workforce. The proposal has received enthusiastic support from Whakaata Māori and PMN. Given this wide support, funding this pilot project through the PIJF will allow time for it to prove its feasibility to other potential funders as it is unlikely that NZ On Air would be able to continue to fund this project to this level out of ongoing baseline funding.

41. Content sharing arrangements across, Māori Television, PMN, the Whare Kōrero App, NZME and various social media platforms will provide strong visibility to this content.
42. While the strong element of training could have seen this project sit within the Industry Development pillar, most of the costs are around the production of content and Nicole was keen for the project to be seen as delivering on both training and content for an underserved audience.
43. Assessors were supportive of the project however there was concern about the lack of confirmed support from kura given the importance of their participation and the timeframe in schools. One assessor commented, *"Although the application states that 'we are currently in talks with several Kura Kaupapa Māori in both Auckland and the Northland region,' I can't see evidence of any form of commitment from kura, and this is curious omission given the numerous support letters from other organisations."*
44. Staff raised this matter with [REDACTED] who provided further information that they have strong relationships with key kaiako (teachers) and are extremely confident they will be able to deliver in this area. Staff notes that [REDACTED] has 12 years' experience working with kura via the successful rangatahi programme, *Pūkana*. However, as this project cannot proceed without kura support, assessors felt funding should be contingent on their confirmed commitment to the project.
45. In order to fit in with the last two terms of the school year, the producer, [REDACTED], provided an implementation timeline that staff believed would be difficult to achieve. After discussions with staff, [REDACTED] confirmed a new timeline that will see the programme set up and established in 2022 including recruitment of tuākana and teina cadets with production running from 6 February to 1 July 2023. Staff believes this timeframe will improve the project outcome but will want assurances that this updated timeframe will not increase the overall budget.
46. The proposal does note a general commitment to pastoral care, but given the age of the participants, staff believes a Pastoral Care plan should be required as a deliverable prior to contracting.
47. [REDACTED]
48. [REDACTED]
49. Staff reviewed the budget and determined that reductions were possible across several areas, such as production office expenses and salary levels. Such reductions would not impact the overall outcomes and quality of the initiative but would bring it more in line with other comparative schemes, and industry rates
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
52. If funded – staff will discuss these budget issues further with [REDACTED] and seek a revised budget prior to contracting that strips out those ineligible costs and brings other costs down in line with industry standards.

53. The project will ultimately be a pilot programme that delivers a journalism introduction for three rangatahi and 15 tamariki along with 300 minutes of content across multiple platforms that will reach a targeted and underserved audience while promoting te reo Māori and reo Moana. Most importantly it will also serve as a pipeline for young Māori and Pasifika into journalism providing an important service to industry, and an invaluable potential connection to the Te Rito Journalism cadetship if both continue longer term.
54. While this proposal is ambitious, staff believes Cinco Cine has the experience, relationships, and capacity to deliver what will be an important element in developing the Māori and Pacific journalism workforce.

Funding is recommended up to \$800,000 [REDACTED]

Uneasy Money: How We Pay for Art

Metro

\$39,380

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

55. *Uneasy Money* is a four-part investigative series from Metro about the intersection of art and money. 4 x 4,000-word feature articles to be published on a quarterly basis from December 2022 until September 2023.

General Assessment

56. The creative industries contribute \$17.5 billion to New Zealand's GDP (NZ Institute for Economic Research). A flourishing arts sector encourages social cohesion, community empowerment, and helps to build a national identity. However, for an arts sector to remain healthy, it requires the scrutiny of arts journalism.
57. *Uneasy Money* explores the changes to arts funding in Aotearoa and its effect on art creators and consumers.
58. The primary sources of funding for the arts are government funding, community funding, and philanthropy, all of which are decreasing in a post-COVID environment. The project plans to address this issue by investigating five possible subjects. These include:
- The bygone era of philanthropy, which asks if collective models such as micro patronage in the form of crowdfunding will take the place of traditional private philanthropy.
 - The impact of a thriving secondary market on the production of art, and why it benefits sellers and auction houses rather than artists.
 - The consequences of the State's role as a majority arts funder, including the government's \$212.5 million COVID/Delta recovery package, and the possibilities for public input about arts commissioning.
 - The pros and cons of NFTs and the blockchain for artists, sellers, and the public at large.
 - The prevalence of art theft in Aotearoa and ways in which changing definitions of 'ownership' complicate issues of art theft and dispossession.
59. The project will raise public awareness about the changing arts funding landscape and investigate the results of these changes on the arts community in Aotearoa and society at large.
60. Metro has already approached an arts writer [REDACTED] should funding be successful.
61. Metro will promote this investigative series across social media to ensure wide readership and engagement. This series will also support Metro's sustainability by hopefully increasing the size and loyalty of its audience.

62. As part of its commitment to honour the principles of Te Tiriti, all stories in this series would be checked and guided by the platform’s te ao Māori editor [REDACTED]

Staff Opinion

63. Despite arts journalism being a clear ‘at-risk’ area of public interest journalism, applications covering the arts have been few and infrequent. Metro’s application stood out by suggesting relevant and pressing arts journalism topics that would likely not be covered by mainstream outlets because they require time and resourcing that is difficult to prioritise when newsrooms are struggling financially.

64. Metro is committed to arts journalism and has a section dedicated to the arts on its website and in its print editions. The publication has the track record to undertake this investigative series, but lacks the necessary funding, making PIJF support necessary.

65. Assessors acknowledged the lack of investigative arts coverage and were supportive of this application, noting that the project had a “good amount of content for the budget” and “unique and interesting story ideas.” **Funding is recommended up to \$39,380** [REDACTED]

Local Elections 2022

The Spinoff

\$160,187

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

66. *Local Elections 2022* will see The Spinoff form a dedicated team of writers and contributors to cover the elections throughout the motu with the attention it deserves. The project outputs are 5 x 1,000-word written stories per week (totalling 55 stories and 55,000 words) and 2 x 30’ *Gone By Lunchtime* podcast specials.

General Assessment

67. The applicant argues that local election coverage has been declining for years, particularly in regional areas. Despite this, it remains a vital facet of public interest journalism and is critical to ensuring that communities fully and actively participate in democracy.

68. Poor election coverage is arguably reflected in low voter turnout rates for local elections across the nation. Some examples include 38.2% (2019) in Auckland, 43.2% in the Bay of Plenty, and 40.2% in Northland.

69. For this project, a team of writers would conduct on-the-ground reporting of all local elections occurring across Aotearoa, including reporting from the most underserved regions.

70. The articles will include features, profiles, race reports from electorates all over the country, opinion, and analysis. The project would take place over a 13-week period between July 18 - October 14, 2022. Content will be delivered over 11 of those weeks.

71. Pieces will be written in formats that are shareable and accessible to younger voters who primarily receive news digitally or via social media platforms, and who may otherwise not seek out local election coverage. The Spinoff has an engaged social media audience, averaging a daily reach of 365,000 people.

72. Aiding The Spinoff in this project is Policy Local, a non-partisan comparative tool that provides voters free and straightforward information about all local council and body elections happening nation-wide. Policy Local would receive \$15,000 of the budget as a consultancy fee.
73. With Policy Local providing research support, The Spinoff will be able to investigate trends, provide comprehensive analyses, and cover regional races whose outcomes have major consequences on their communities, but whose regionality mean they lack mainstream coverage.
74. Although some local election campaigns are currently under way, this project would begin on July 18, with a two-week research and development period to allow for writers and editors to establish beats and story scope. Full coverage of local elections would begin on August 1 and continue through to October 14, following the release of the official results of all the races.
75. The Spinoff has demonstrated an interest in local election coverage. It successfully undertook a smaller local election project in 2016 which focused on Auckland Council elections. The Spinoff intends for this project to contribute to its sustainability by attracting membership revenue so that it may continue to provide regional coverage once PIJF funding is finished.
76. The Spinoff will publicise stories by giving them hero placement on its front page for its three-month duration and will cross-promote major stories in The Spinoff's live updates and morning newsletter, *The Bulletin*.
77. The Spinoff will work with Māori writers to ensure that te ao Māori perspectives and issues are being foregrounded with a staff member [REDACTED] as kaiārahi Māori.
78. The project team includes potential junior writers who will have opportunities to develop their skills and experience by working alongside senior writers and travelling to report on-location. Listed in the application as proposed contributing writers are [REDACTED] who are currently employees of The Spinoff and, in [REDACTED] working on IRL, a PIJF-funded project. The applicant states that if funding was successful, backfilling would be addressed.

Staff Opinion

79. Due to a lack of capacity, local elections are under-reported, particularly on platforms with a larger youth audience, such as The Spinoff. Staff was therefore pleased to see an application with this focus. This project will cover a gap in that market and aims to create a more informed millennial and Gen Z voting base.
80. The national scope of the proposal was commended as it would provide more bang-for-buck, as well as engage younger voters across the motu. The partnership with Policy Local will lend the applicant more resources and data insights expertise for its nationwide coverage.
81. The proposal states a commitment to te ao Māori in the project's coverage and The Spinoff has appointed [REDACTED] which staff felt was a good demonstration that Māori perspectives would be represented across reporting.
82. Assessors noted that, *"there is no doubt the local body elections requires strong PIJ which has not been provided consistently around the country. This proposal is bold and seeks to increase voter engagement, which is a good thing."*
83. Staff noted the inclusion of two existing senior Spinoff staff members in the project and recommended funding so long as backfilling was demonstrated so that existing staff salaries would not be subsidised in any way. This will be confirmed prior to contracting.
84. Staff expressed concerns that the applicant had included opinion pieces as part of this project. All assessors agreed that, in line with PIJF guidelines, no opinion pieces should be produced as part of any PIJF funding. Revised deliverables with opinion pieces replaced by eligible PIJ content will be confirmed prior to contracting.
- Funding is recommended of up to \$160,187.**

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

85. *Separated* is a bilingual docu-series showing five stories of Chinese immigrants in Aotearoa living apart from loved ones overseas. It would consist of 5 x 10' videos and 5 x 2,000-word articles, to be published on Go Global's website and WeChat platform (GoKiwi).

General Assessment

86. GoKiwi was founded in 2013 with a focus on coverage of local news and current affairs for the Chinese community in New Zealand.
87. WeChat is the primary social media platform for the Chinese community in Aotearoa, and it has become a huge resource for Chinese New Zealanders to obtain content and news. In Aotearoa, WeChat has 180,000 monthly active users, according to digital agency UMS (2018). GoKiwi's WeChat official account has over 460,000 followers (made up of both local and international subscribers) and reaches an estimated 80% of Chinese New Zealanders.
88. Chinese-Kiwi audiences are highly underserved by, and underrepresented in, mainstream news and media outlets. Because of this, and other cultural barriers, engagement with mainstream media is generally very low across Chinese-Kiwi communities, who prefer to consume news from Chinese-language sources, many of which originate from Mainland China and do not speak directly to a Chinese-kiwi experience. This claim is also supported by research conducted in NZ On Air's own Asian Media Use in Aotearoa NZ in 2021 Report.
89. One aspect of this experience, which remains unknown to the wider local population, is that of separation from loved ones, often for years at a time. Some of the causal factors are decades-long immigration policies, visa issues, financial need, and more recently, the pandemic. *Separated* plans to examine these issues by following five members of the Chinese-kiwi community who have had to adjust without whānau.
90. *Separated* will be bilingual, with text, audio, and captioning in English and Cantonese or Mandarin.
91. By interviewing Chinese migrants, *Separated* hopes to raise awareness of the particular struggles which are well-known within Chinese-Kiwi communities but not reported on in wider media.
92. *Separated* reflects the reality that the Chinese-Kiwi experience is unique and the community of migrants in Aotearoa deserve media that accurately reflects them (as opposed to media made for non-migrant Chinese audiences) and normalises their stories for wider audiences.
93. It is important to note that long-term separation was an issue for the Chinese community before the pandemic and the project will not be limited to COVID-related distance.
94. *Separated* aims to highlight the diversity of Chinese-Kiwis and will attempt to feature subjects from a wide range of ages, genders, income brackets, religions, and geographic locations, with an eye to find subjects outside of the main cities. Some indicative subjects could be:
- International/teenage students, who are usually young people that have left their families to study in Aotearoa, paying exorbitant fees that their families have saved up for, and often living with homestay parents under constant academic and cultural pressure.

- Parents separated from their young children, who arrive in Aotearoa hoping to get a residency visa so they can eventually bring their tamariki into the country. This process can be delayed for years, resulting in fractured relationships and emotional distress.
 - Adult children separated from elderly family members for whom they are the primary or only caregivers, in search of economic security and supporting their family overseas.
95. Videos will consist of interviews, voiceovers, and the use of archival and personal footage. Each episode will go between subjects in their present lives and communications with loved ones in China.
 96. In addition to the video content, the accompanying text articles will investigate how separation affects the mental health of Chinese New Zealanders, the cultural gaps between different ethnic groups, how they are affected by immigration policies, and other systemic social issues.
 97. The production timeline is as follows: July-Aug 2022 (research to find main subjects), Sep-Nov (pre-production and interviews) Dec 2022-Mar 2023 (production) Apr-May 2023 (post-production) Jun 2023 (public release).
 98. Go Global has been in talks with RNZ about the possibility of it becoming a secondary platform.
 99. Go Global will also strive to normalise kupu Māori and incorporate elements that reflect the fact that Chinese-Kiwis are living in relation to tangata whenua. This would be a first step and a new introduction for some of Go Kiwi's existing audience, but the platform seeks to bridge the gaps between the two communities and reflect its ongoing learnings towards honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Staff Opinion

100. All staff and assessors considered the report of expert cultural assessor [REDACTED] when assessing *Separated*.
101. The two prevailing issues raised by all assessors were that of platform accessibility on WeChat and the project's journalistic value. WeChat is only accessible for users of the platform who have created a personal account. As funded content must be available for free and on a publicly visible platform, staff had discussed the limitations of WeChat with the applicant prior to submission. Go Global assured staff that *Separated* will be simultaneously released on a separate Go Kiwi website which is freely accessible, in addition to Go Kiwi's WeChat and socials. Staff recommends that confirmation of this condition is received prior to contracting.
102. Staff had spoken to the applicant prior to submission about the project's suitability for PIJF funding, noting that the project may fit more clearly into general NZ On Air factual funding. However, the applicant was adamant that PIJF was a good fit, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Given that this project had clearer deliverables, and the applicant had experience in docu-series production, staff believed *Separated* to be the stronger application.
103. Although the application emphasised a storytelling lens over an investigative one, staff felt that *Separated* provided an important opportunity to connect with Chinese-Kiwi audiences and reflect topics that are both relevant to the Chinese-Kiwi community and newsworthy in their own right.
104. Additionally, PIJF guidelines recognise that 'journalistic value' has a broader definition when applied to ethnic media and journalism, to account for a deficit in coverage across mainstream outlets.
105. Given NZ On Air's broader s36(c) goals to reach and represent Chinese-Kiwi audiences, staff felt this project was an effective way to provide worthwhile content, made by a growing Chinese language media outlet which could best reach that audience directly. It is hoped that, if funded, this project will help Go Global to grow its journalistic capacity and may encourage the platform to consider partnerships with mainstream outlets, thus better serving Chinese Kiwi audiences.
106. All assessors felt the exemplars provided in the application were compelling and felt confident in producer, [REDACTED] experience and participation in *Separated*.

108. Staff is satisfied that reminding Go Global of the PIJF’s eligibility requirement to be subject to NZ Media Council principles would be a sufficient prompt to maintain journalistic objectivity. Principle 10 of the NZ Media Council’s guidelines on Conflicts of Interest states: *“To fulfil their proper watchdog role, publications must be independent and free of obligations to their news sources. They should avoid any situations that might compromise such independence. Where a story is enabled by sponsorship, gift or financial inducement, that sponsorship, gift or financial inducement should be declared. Where an author’s link to a subject is deemed to be justified, the relationship of author to subject should be declared.”* Staff understand that the NZ Media Council has received a membership application from Go Global and staff recommends that funding is conditional on the confirmation of NZ Media Council approval of the application prior to contracting.

110. This project will be subject to the PIJF normal check-in process, and staff notes that a specialist assessor will need to be used to monitor Chinese language outputs.

112. Additionally, all assessors felt the project’s budget was high compared to other NZ On Air-funded projects with similar content outputs. Staff noted that Red Sky Productions’ *Inside Child Poverty* television documentary feature (1 x 44’) was funded for \$204,970. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] They recommended that, should any existing Go Global staff be seconded onto the project, evidence of backfilling would need to be demonstrated prior to contracting.

114. In line with other PIJF-funded projects, funding is recommended of up to **\$210,000** [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mental Health in Ethnic Communities

Apna

\$101,897

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

115. This project seeks to empower Indo-Pacific migrant ethnic communities to appropriately respond to mental health issues. Its outputs would be 6 x 20’ podcast episodes between July 2022 - January 2023.

General Assessment

116. The Apna network has existed for 20 years and comprises TV Apna (Freeview Chanel 36) and Radio Apna 990 AM. Both are 24-hour free-to-air public platforms that cater to primarily Indian communities, as well as Asian and Pasifika communities.
117. Apna has a combined reach of approximately 100,000 viewers (location not specified) and listeners and has dedicated programmes in English, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Tagalog, Malay, Fijian, Samoan, Nepali, and Urdu languages.
118. Mental health is a significant social issue within Indo-Pacific New Zealanders. To provide appropriate prevention and treatment measures, mental health needs to be socially contextualised for members of this community by its own ethnic media outlets.
119. *Mental Health in Ethnic Communities* is a pilot project that will investigate mental health and well-being issues in the Indo-Pacific communities, particularly within the Indian community.
120. The project will tackle important mental health topics that are considered taboo or uncomfortable within Indo-Pacific communities, particularly migrants and the elderly. Some of them would include the prevalence of mental illness within these communities, stressors that harm mental health, the normalisation of seeking help, and the range of resources available.
121. This project plans to address a deficit in much-needed mental health journalism aimed at ethnic communities. It also plans to combat the growth of medical misinformation and institutional mistrust around psychology and counselling within Indian communities by taking a culturally responsive approach to these subjects and providing accurate medical information.

Staff Opinion

122. Applications by ethnic media, for ethnic audiences, were prioritised for PIJF Round 4. Staff felt that this project was timely in its subject matter, particularly considering the negative impact of COVID-19 on the mental wellbeing of minority communities who may be hesitant to engage with mental health information if it is disseminated by mainstream outlets and not culturally specific.
123. Assessors recognise that this project will build Apna’s capacity for news delivery and strengthen their ability to serve their Indo-Pacific audiences.
124. Assessors had concerns that this project’s outputs were low in relation to the budget request. However, as the applicant is still building their newsroom, it was agreed that they should be allowed to stick with their suggested number of outputs to ensure that their standard of quality remained high.
125. Because of the sensitivity around discussions of mental health, staff highlighted the need to ensure participant safety across all aspects of this project. A Duty of Care plan is therefore required for funding to be released.
126. Overall, staff felt this project was a worthy topic that fitted the overall objectives of the PIJF. **Funding is recommended for up to \$101,897** [REDACTED]

The South Today

Allied Press

\$695,000

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Synopsis

127. *The South Today* delivers regional video news content to local communities in collaboration with the Allied Press and Regional Community Newspaper Network (and associated digital platforms) reaching over 400,000 households across the South Island. Outputs include 960 x 1-3' video news clips (approx. 20 per week over 48 weeks) and 234 x 10' news bulletins (Monday to Friday).

General Assessment

128. Over the past six years (until August 2021), through co-investment with NZ On Air's Regional Media funding, *The South Today* has delivered over 5,000 1-2' video clips from the Southern region. During this period, *The South Today* has also rolled out a programme of video training and staff upskilling across the regions.
129. *The South Today* provides local video news in towns across the Southern regions of Aotearoa that would seldom receive coverage on mainstream platforms.
130. In 2021-2022, Allied Press applied for increased *The South Today* funding through the PIJF, with a major focus on improving the quality and quantity of video output across the regions.
131. Despite numerous COVID-related setbacks, *The South Today* is currently on-target to deliver on PIJF Round 1 content outputs of 622 videos between September 2021-August 2022.
132. This application proposes an increase to *The South Today's* content output, aiming to deliver 960 video news videos clips (1-3') at an average of 20 per week over 48 weeks. The video news clips will be available individually for multi-channel distribution across the Allied Press network of sites. The project would cover the period between 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.
133. In 2022, two full-time video journalists were added to cover the Christchurch region, as well as a full-time video journalist in Queenstown, who also reports on the mid-West Coast area. *The South Today* also employed a regular presenter [REDACTED] to build viewer loyalty and brand recognition.
134. [REDACTED] was appointed as Director of Video News in October 2021 and began implementing improvements to story quality and the technical abilities of regional news reporting staff. A new Line Producer role has been created to assist [REDACTED] with the daily production of the news bulletin. This role will also be responsible for ensuring a range of culturally significant stories that include Māori and Pasifika voices.
135. The team is now working on a plan to relaunch *The South Today* with a tighter 15' - 20' show, which is designed to increase online engagement and viewership. The 5:30 pm bulletin is presently broadcast live on television in Dunedin and Invercargill and then uploaded for online viewing at 7pm nightly. The team is also working towards live streaming the bulletin at 5:30pm throughout the region. Allied Press will continue to use Channel 39 as a traditional broadcast medium for its older demographic, but the news bulletin will also be uploaded to *The South Today's* YouTube channel.
136. All video content will continue to be distributed on Allied Press' South Island website platforms – ODT.co.nz and regional community websites including North and South Canterbury, Christchurch Starnews.co.nz, North Otago, Otago, Southland, Central Otago and Lakes District, and the West Coast of the South Island. All *The South Today* videos will be uploaded to ODT.co.nz in a permanent channel and video content will be embedded within news stories published on ODT.co.nz that are shared extensively in the main lead positions on the homepage, and externally on social media such as Facebook and Twitter.
137. The project's decentralised approach to news gathering will continue. With 19 regional community newspapers, Allied Press now has more newsrooms to add to the existing 12 equipped to capture video content. Dedicated reporters, in consultation with their local newsrooms, will decide what stories they will cover each day, meaning coverage is driven by reporters closest to their communities.

138. This application included a letter of support from Allied Press which will continue to host and promote *The South Today* on The Otago Daily Times and its other regional news services.

Staff Opinion

139. One staff member summarised the assessors' consensus that, "NZ On Air has provided ongoing support for the *South Today* to ensure South Island local coverage. The project has improved and provides strong PIJ to underserved communities over a diverse area."

140. Assessors praised the project's hyper-local focus and observed its importance as the only local video news service that covers the South Island in this way and with such regularity.

141. *The South Today* appears to be well-promoted on ODT and other Allied websites and the content is consistently good. Although viewership figures were not provided in the application, NZ On Air's own tracking data show *The South Today* performing very well, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] While the budget had grown by approx. \$20,000 since its last application, this increase was thought to be well-considered and conservative.

142. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Staff is supportive of this project's aims and outputs and believe it to be a good example of PIJ. However, as referenced in the *Local Focus* assessment, staff notes that these long-running NZ On Air-funded journalism projects will need to be rationalised moving forward post-the PIJF, [REDACTED]

143. Assessors raised the issue that *The South Today's* reporting, while good, was not fully representative of the cultural and ethnic diversity that exists in the South Island, particularly in iwi and Māori communities. Staff acknowledged this point and noted that Allied Press had recently appointed a PIJF funded Partnership Editor and has been funded for a cultural competency employee training project. Staff expects the positive impact of this role and training initiative will be reflected in future Allied Press' reporting. **Funding is recommended of up to \$695,000.**

Released under the Official Information Act

ANNEX A - ALL PIJF PROJECTS APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN THIS ROUND

Project Name	Company	\$ Request	\$ Recomm	Result
Local Focus 2022-2023	Very Nice Productions	\$630,000	\$604,520	Approved – Panel recommends funding
t2T Teina 2 Tuakana	Cinco Cine	\$900,704	\$800,000	Approved – Panel recommends funding
Uneasy Money: How We Pay For Art	Metro	\$39,380	\$39,380	Approved – Panel recommends funding
Local Elections 2022	The Spinoff	\$160,187	\$160,187	Approved – Panel recommends funding
Separated	Go Global	\$267,465	\$210,000	Approved – Panel recommends funding
Mental Health in Ethnic Communities	Apna	\$101,897	\$101,897	Approved – Panel recommends funding
The South Today	Allied Press	\$695,000	\$695,000	Approved – Panel recommends funding

