# AGENDA ITEM 2.13



# **FUNDING DECISIONS**

# RECOMMENDATION

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

- \$460,000 to Te Reo Irirangi O Te Hiku O Te Ika for Haukāinga 2022/23
- \$452,198 to Aotearoa Media Collective for Mata Media
- \$181,800 to The Big Idea for TBI Video Kickstart
- \$187,114 to Great Southern Television for The Hui Summer Edition 2
- \$85,255 to BusinessDesk for The Business of Health
- \$157,885 to The Spinoff for Forbidden Fruit
- \$30,460 to Metro Media Group for Who Owns Auckland?
- \$169,440 to the Indo Kiwi United Trust for Project Series of Community Oriented Programs
- \$46,706 to Kiwi Kids News Ltd for Te Reo Maori Editor Kiwi Kids News

and **declines** funding of:

8pplications recommended for total funding of \$1,612,973

# BACKGROUND

- 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.
- <u>General Guidelines for the PIJF</u> were published in April 2021. The principles set out in <u>the Cabinet paper</u> 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 <u>General Guidelines</u> were updated in March 2022.
- The PIJF supports journalistic capability across three funding pillars: Projects, Roles, and Industry Development.

# **OVERVIEW**

4. The fifth 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 \$6,814,069.

- 5. Building on funding already distributed in the previous four rounds, the Round 5 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 and feedback from industry around shortages in the journalism workforce, Round 5 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:
  - 1 Industry Development application
  - 1 Project application
  - Maximum of 2 Roles (across both Targeted and Content Creation role categories).
- This SIC paper assesses Projects with recommended funding of up to \$1,770,858 from a total ask of \$2,549,839.
- 8. The assessment panel for Round 4 included:



- 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.
- 9. Due to an increased number of Chinese media applications,

was commissioned

to assess Chinese media applications only. He reported back verbally to staff and his comments were shared with the assessment panel to further inform their decision making.

# **GENERAL ASSESSMENT & STAFF OPINION**

Haukāinga 2022/23

Te Reo Irirangi O Te Hiku O Te Ika

\$460,000

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work					

Synopsis

10. Haukāinga 2022/23 is an additional season of the video news series produced by and for Northlanders for Te Hiku's platforms, with Whakaata Māori and Iwi radio as content partners. Outputs include 70 short-form videos, 35 bonus content videos, three livestream broadcasts, 64 OnDemand livestream videos, to be produced over 12 months.

# General Assessment

- 11. The application states that *Haukāinga* is the premier source of trusted local news for Northland due to its history of providing high-quality video and written stories.
- 12. As such, *Haukāinga* has built a deep grassroots network which enables the project to source and report on stories that would not otherwise be found in mainstream media.
- 13. Te Hiku asserts that Haukāinga takes into account issues of cultural, hapū, iwi, and community significance with a leaning towards telling positive stories that highlight and enhance particular rural and regional Te Tai Tokerau experiences, lifestyles, and issues.



- 15. In addition to the short-form videos, Haukainga 2022/23 will continue to produce livestreams of notable public events, such as Waitangi Day, the Manu Korero Regional Speech Competition, and kapa haka competitions.
- 16. Haukāinga 2022/23 continues to have a reo Māori language plan so that regional dialects are used in its content and tikanga Māori ethics guide all aspects of reporting.

17.

# **Staff Opinion**

- 18. Assessors were unanimously in favour of this proposal, with one commenting that, "this is a sophisticated and well-established project from a provider that has demonstrated it delivers to its promises and meets the needs of an underserved and isolated audience".
- 19. Haukainga was praised for catering to Northland's unique audience and needs through an innovative community-led approach.
- 20. Staff noted that the budget and outputs were in line with the previous season, which was meeting output targets. Funding is recommended up to \$460,000.

Mata Media

# Aotearoa Media Collective

\$452,198

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work	

# Synopsis

21. Mata Media is a new cutting-edge Māori current affairs project that will provide a suite of multimedia content designed for a digital-first audience. Outputs include six long-form digital projects, 26 visual podcasts, and associated social media content, delivered over 48 weeks. The primary platform is TVNZ+, with TVNZ 1 and RNZ as additional platforms.

# **General Assessment**

- 22. Mata Media is described as a re-imagining of Māori current affairs content, with a focus on providing standalone digital-first content which can be disseminated whenever and however is most effective for audience reach.
- 23. This approach is based on the outcomes of Te Māngai Pāho's research report 'The Future of Māori News', which found that Māori audiences need relevant content crafted specifically for how and where they consume news.
- 24. *Mata Media* encourages collaboration between journalists, the networks, and audience experts who will work together to produce platform-specific content.
- 25. *Mata Media*'s team will consult with TVNZ's Head of Online, **and RNZ** and RNZ to determine each project and how they will be delivered and hosted on TVNZ and RNZ's platforms.
- 26. Aotearoa Media Collective will be responsible for all production (research, pre-production and postproduction, legal checks, delivery of content and supporting social media content).
- 27.
- 28. The proposal argues that long-form journalism is an area where Māori audiences and creatives are currently being left behind. It notes that content such as Stuff Circuit and Newsroom Investigates are allowing journalists to delve into significant issues by providing the resource needed to do justice to these kaupapa in a way that is difficult to achieve within the restrictions of a weekly current affairs format. *Mata Media* would help to address this lack of parity.
- 29. Suggested topics include:



30. The proposal includes a detailed social media release strategy and production schedule. A particular focus area is TikTok and rangatahi presenter has been brought on to host TikTok-exclusive material.



- 34. Assessors were unanimously in favour of this proposal, praising the in-depth investigative capacity of the project, the specificity of the proposed topics, and its innovative format, which recognises that many Māori audiences often lie outside of linear platforms.
- 35. The project team are amongst the most experienced and respected professionals in the industry and have a proven track record of producing public interest journalism. Staff felt confident that they would produce high-value content for underserved audiences.
- 36. For seven years, Aotearoa Media Collective has produced award winning Māori current affairs show The Hui for Great Southern Television (Discovery/TV3)
- 37. Staff notes there may be implications around full funding across 2023 in light of the upcoming full operational launch of the ANZPM from 1 July 2023, but assessors felt the PIJF has an opportunity to pilot a new and innovative project in the interim. Funding is recommended up to \$452,198

# **TBI Video Kickstart**

# The Big Idea

\$181,800

Key Personnel	Title/s	X	Relevant Past Work	

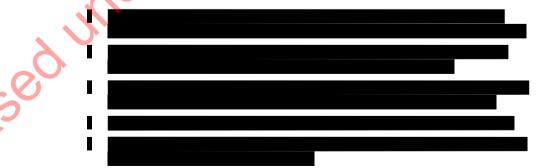
#### Synopsis

TBI Video Kickstart is a project to support the production and development of a series of 26 short videos

 (4') to improve the quality of public interest journalism and investigative reporting, relating to the arts for
 underserved communities.

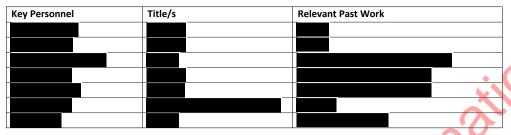
# **General Assessment**

39. This project will focus on topical arts news and prioritise viewpoints from diverse, regional, and underserved communities, including Māori, Pasifika, Pan-Asian, youth, LGBTQIA+, and disabled perspectives. Topics include:



- 40. The Big Idea (TBI) argues that the video format is necessary to make funded content as accessible and shareable as possible, particularly in a media environment where video-based platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are hugely popular. As art is largely a visual medium, video also enhances the quality and storytelling possibilities of arts journalism.
- 41. Several of TBI's previous stories have been picked up by larger mainstream news outlets which have contributed to public awareness and policy changes pertaining to the arts sector. TBI contends that this video project would increase the likelihood of such stories being identified and amplified by the mainstream press, in turn, increasing viewership.
- 42. TBI is one of the only arts-focused media platforms in Aotearoa and it continually works with arts writers to develop skills that might otherwise be lost to the wider media sector. The application contends that improving TBI's video capabilities will have positive flow-on effects for the writers and creatives that it works with in terms of providing them with training opportunities.
- 43. Furthermore, TBI argues that video will boost their long-term sustainability as a platform by allowing them to reach new audiences, attract future sponsorships, and pursue new revenue streams. TBI states that it is *"extremely confident that [video projects] will be able to become a long-term feature of TBI's delivery for the sector"*.
- 44. TBI's proposal states that it is committed to the integration and reflection of mātauranga Māori on its platform. It states that TBI collaborate with Māori artists and creatives at all available opportunities and that TBI actively promotes the principles of Te Tiriti.
- 45. Content would be made available to other creative or media organisations to publish or broadcast to boost its audience reach and recognition.
- 46. TBI included an in-kind platform contribution of \$74,000.

- 47. Staff acknowledged that arts journalism has been under threat for the past decade and TBI is an arts-focused platform that has an established audience base. Though TBI does not currently make video content, due to cost, it has procured the services of a professional director/editor/videographer and its content director is experienced in TV and video production. Combined with TBI's track record of arts journalism, staff felt confident that the platform will be successful at executing this project.
- 48. Staff thought the proposed video concepts were relevant to the arts community, underexplored, and lent themselves well to a video format.
- 59. This project's budget is in line with other similar PIJF-funded video projects and has higher content outputs in comparison.
- 51. Additionally, the applicant has stated a commitment to continuing video output once initial funding finishes. TBI argues that video output, especially for an arts news provider, is a critical pathway to sustainability and PIJF funding will allow them to grow their profile and expand their audience base. Staff felt this was a valid argument and demonstrated a long-term sustainability strategy. Funding is recommended up to \$181,800



#### Synopsis

52. A second season of the summer edition of the Māori current affairs programme, *The flui*, to be delivered weekly over its usual hiatus. Outputs are six episodes between 4-7', to be uploaded directly to Facebook and shared on Newshub's web and social media platforms.

# **General Assessment**

- 53. The second series of *The Hui: Summer Edition* seeks to provide training and mentorship to four young Māori journalists ()) while producing six current affairs stories from a Māori perspective.
- 54. In 2021, Season 1 of *The Hui: Summer Edition* was launched through PIJF funding. Its stories were presented by *The Hui's* teina reporters, and and a store of the mentorship and guidance from tuakana team members such as a store of the show under the mentorship of the store of the show under the mentorship of the store of the store of the show under the mentorship of the store of the store of the store of the show under the mentorship of the store of the store
- 55. As a result of last year's series, and and the were given the opportunity to step into more senior roles with *The Hui*, taking ownership of the researching, writing, and reporting of their stories directly because of the upskilling they had received. Their talent was developed but their progress also represents *The Hui Summer Edition*'s contribution to the Māori journalism sector and the broader journalism landscape in general.
- 56. The first series received and grew the page's followers by more than and grew the page's followers by
- 57. The proposal states that, as *The Hui* is a digital-first programme, this second Summer Edition will maintain its core audience, as well as the audience gained by the first series over social media. The applicant stresses that Māori audiences are entitled to year-round current affairs at a high-level.
- 58. Additionally, the applicant argues that young Māori journalists also deserve continuing job and training opportunities and that continuing the show will contribute to the sustainability of Māori current affairs, which face more insecurity than general current affairs programmes.
- **59**. Due to the social media platform nature of this content and the relative youth of the presenters, *The Hui* believes the Summer edition will have a stronger reach into the hard-to-reach younger audience.

- 60. One staff member summed up the unanimous consensus that, "This project has dual outcomes increasing the capability of our Māori journalism workforce and providing strong content for audiences. The previous season did well and the four reporters to be mentored this time would improve on that."
- 61. Staff felt the project would continue the upskilling of Māori and reo-speaking reporters in the field, under the mentoring of some of the most experienced and respected journalists currently working.

62. Although there was discussion around the increased budget and reduced output for this second season, because of the increase in the number of trainees and the increase in wrap-around support provided by trainers, staff felt the increased cost was warranted. **Funding is recommended up to \$187,114**.

Key Personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work

**BusinessDesk** 

#### Synopsis

63. The Business of Health investigates the involvement and efficacy of the companies, charities, and agencies involved in healthcare spending. Its outputs are 50 -70 text-based stories.

#### **General Assessment**

The Business of Health

- 64. BusinessDesk has specialised in business news since 2008. Though it operates on a subscription model behind a paywall, it also offers free content, including two PIJF-funded projects (Charity Sector Investigation and How Good Is Our Public Service?)
- 65. Health accounts for roughly \$1 of every \$5 of government spending and impacts all New Zealanders. However, because comprehensive investigations of the sector require significant time, labour, and cost, healthcare reporting is often limited in scope and conducted from an end-user perspective.
- 66. BusinessDesk contends that an in-depth series is required to present an accurate picture of healthcare spending, one that accounts for the different funding and ownership models that exist in Aotearoa.





#### **Staff Opinion**

\$85.255

71. Overall, assessors were in favour of this application,

Assessors were keen to get an

assurance from BusinessDesk that Māori writers would be involved in any story focused on Māori. Staff will seek this assurance in writing from BusinessDesk prior to contracting.

- 72. BusinessDesk received PIJF funding for similar investigative projects and has consistently produced high volumes of well-researched civic-focused pieces. It has demonstrated it is able to ensure PIJF content sits outside its paywall and is freely available, which remains the case for this project.
- 73. Staff felt the topics proposed were relevant and served PIJF goals by contributing to the public discourse around healthcare.
- 74. One staff member wrote, "BusinessDesk are well-suited to undertake an investigation of this sort, which looks at the structural and economic 'causes and effects' of healthcare in Aotearoa. Healthcare is an important topic especially post-Covid, but reporting tends to focus on single issues, regional issues, or high-profile news items that do not provide a cohesive picture of health funding overall. This project is PU and health reporting applications have been surprisingly absent in the rounds so far."
- 75. Funding is recommended up to \$85,255.





Metro

Key Personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work	

#### Synopsis

76. Who Owns Auckland? is an investigative series of three long-form feature articles of 3,000 4,000 words about varying aspects of commercial development in Tāmaki Makaurau.

#### **General Assessment**

- 77. This project is a three-part investigation of commercial property ownership in Auckland's CBD.
- 78. Property ownership is central to the NZ economy and has been a topic of much interest and debate in mainstream media and society at large. Despite this, Metro argues that most media attention focuses on residential property and little coverage is given to commercial property, which has an enormous impact on the public life of our cities.
- 79. Auckland in particular has undergone a sustained period of CBD development to add square meterage to the skyline.

80. Indicative topics include:



- 81. Metro argues that a project of this importance will not only foster loyalty amongst its existing audience base but encourage its long-term sustainability by garnering new readers.
- 82. As a demonstration of commitment to the principles of te Tiriti, all stories will be checked and guided by Metro's te ao Māori editor, Morgan Godfery.
- 83. Metro also included an in-kind platform contribution of

- 84. Assessors were unanimously in favour of this proposal, despite noting that it might be seen as 'business as usual' for Metro if not for the depth and scope of research required and the magazine's lack of resourcing.
- 85. Staff felt there was clear PIJ value for the Auckland population in uncovering the unseen socio-economic forces in the city's CBD development.

- 86. They were swayed by the argument that journalistic coverage of commercial real estate, which is economically and socially impactful, is lacking, and felt this project would help to address that gap.
- 87. One staff member summarised: "Metro is an Auckland-focused magazine and Auckland's commercial land ownership affects the greater economy of Aotearoa as a whole. It's a worthwhile topic with good, proposed story ideas and is only possible with time consuming investigative journalism, which is currently out of scope for the magazine, making PIJF funding necessary."
- 88. This project's budget falls in line with other comparable PIJF-funded magazine investigations.

# 89. Funding is recommended up to \$30,460.

# Series of Community Oriented Programs Indo Kiwi United Trust

Key Personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work		

# Synopsis

90. The NZ Punjabi News seeks to produce a weekly series of 48 videos, 30-40', covering the topics of health, social issues, parenting and elder care.

# **General Assessment**

- 91. The NZ Punjabi News claims to be Aotearoa's largest and most popular news channel among the Punjabi community, with over 100k subscribers.
- 92. In 2022, the platform conducted a survey with members of the Punjabi community, including representatives from various community groups, about the news content they felt was currently missing from the media landscape.
- 93. The topics deemed 'most needed' pertained to health, social issues, parenting and elder care.
- 94. This project would see the NZ Punjabi News create 12 videos per topic, plus monthly one-hour livestreams, which discuss issues that relate specifically to Punjabi and Sikh communities. Episodes would include interviews with experts and include:

- 99. The NZ Punjabi News argue that the scope and length of this project falls outside of their current resourcing and requires PIJF funding to complete.
- 100. This application came with six letters of support from Punjabi and Sikh community groups, including the Supreme Sikh Society of NZ, the Dairy and Business Owners Group, and the Christchurch, Tauranga and Bay of Plenty Sikh Societies.
- 101. The platform provided an in-kind contribution

169 440

102.

- 103. Those in favour noted that, "the need for this community is high and they do have an audience. This limited project might be a way to support them while not setting up unsustainable structures and staffing."
- 104. It was felt by some assessors that the NZ Punjabi News supplied evidence of its research into its community's news needs and is well-placed to deliver that content directly to an underserved audience. They felt the topics spoke to concerns within the Punjabi and Sikh communities that may not have been covered in mainstream news because of their cultural sensitivity (such as elder care options and drunk driving) but were nonetheless important to ensuring that these communities could thrive in Aotearoa.
- 105. Staff also took the application's letters of support into consideration given that they represent the voices of community leaders and members of the intended audience. On balance Staff believes given the Fund's stated priority of supporting Ethnic Media and NZ Punjabi News's established rapport with a target audience not served by mainstream media, this project has the potential to deliver strong public interest journalism outcomes and **funding is recommended up to \$169,440**.

Te Reo Māori Project		Kiwi Kids News	$\boldsymbol{\lambda}$	\$46,706
			0	
Key Personnel	Title/s	Relevant	Past Work	

#### Synopsis

106. Kiwi Kids News seeks to employ a te reo Māori Editor, Chief Editor, and Researcher for a year-long project to produce two weekly news articles (minimum 180 words) written in te reo Māori. Articles will be accompanied by an English translation and an audio file of the reo text read aloud.

# **General Assessment**

- 107. Kiwi Kids News is a news website and educational resource for kura and tamariki which has been operating for 11 years. While all content is free, full access is restricted to subscribers, of which there are two types school and student. As of 2022, it has subscribed schools.
- 108. Kiwi Kids News produces between articles per week and has over 7000 articles on the website, evidencing its ability to create consistent content for the 8–13-year-old audience.

# 109. According to the applicant,

- 10. If funded, the te reo Māori Editor would write two news articles per week in reo, informed by tikanga Māori (alongside an English translation) and would record an audio file of the reo articles to ensure that they are accessible and have correct pronunciation.
- 111. The Researcher role would include overall strategy and background research into topics, which would include health and wellbeing, social media, bullying, as well as general news.
- 112. The Editor role will be responsible for site formatting for the written and audio content, as well as sourcing images.

- 113. Kiwi Kids News currently has no dedicated reo-language content, although the Editor had previously identified and approached several suitable candidates to create reo-language news articles but was unable to retain them due to a lack of funding.
- 114. The application argues that Kiwi Kids News' established audience of kura and tamariki would benefit from reo-language content and that it would help to diversify their content,
   The application states that the platform hopes to continue the reo-language section postfunding.
- 115.
- 116. Kiwi Kids News also included an in-kind platform contribution

- 117. While staff acknowledged that the applicant's news items serve primarily as educational resources for classrooms and tamariki, this project is purely PIJ is its aims and would deliver PIJ content outputs.
- 118. One staff member noted that, "Despite it's 'after school' origins, this web site has gained significant following because it works directly with kids via schools. With little to no funding it is actually reaching more kids than most media outlets and growing this range to provide for kura would be equitable. The ask is small and meets a vital need to ensure kids engage with news."
- 119. Without an indication of the personnel likely to be involved, some assessors were concerned at the calibre of te reo Māori to be offered and suggested a language plan approved by TMP would ensure the quality of the content.
- 120. Staff were supportive of the platform's approach to creating original material in reo, from a te ao Māori perspective, rather than simply translating English content into reo Māori.
- 121. Despite some hesitancy about the necessity for the Editor and Researcher roles, staff felt that this additional support was needed to ensure that the most culturally and linguistically qualified person was chosen for the te reo Māori Editor position. As all roles are part-time, the cost for 12 months was seen as acceptable.
- 122. The proposal included a schedule that had all three staff beginning work and being funded from December 2022, despite no content being delivered until February (presumably in line with the start of the school year). Staff feels this amount of lead-in time would be excessive, especially for the support roles. Following consultation with the applicant, a condition of the funding will be a revised schedule, with funding starting in January or February 2023. Funding is recommended up to \$46,706

# ANNEX A: PIJF PROJECTS APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN THIS ROUND

Project Name	Company	\$ Requested	\$ Recomm	Result
Haukāinga 2022/23	Te Reo Irirangi O Te Hiku O Te Ika	\$460000	\$460000	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
Mata media	Aotearoa Media Collective	\$452198	\$452198	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
TBI Video Kickstart	The Big Idea	\$181800	181800	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
The Hui Summer Edition, Series 2	Great Southern Television Ltd	\$187114	\$187114	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
The business of health	BusinessDesk	\$85255	\$85255	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
Who Owns Auckland?	Metro Media Group Limited	\$30460	\$30460	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
Project - Series of Community Oriented Programs	Indo kiwi united trust	\$169440	\$169440	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval
Te Reo Māori Editor - Kiwi Kids News	Kiwi Kids News Ltd	\$46706	\$46706	Approved – Panel recommends funding approval