



16 July 2024

Catherine  
fyi-request-27501-d329e206@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA-2024/25-0014

Tēnā koe Catherine

## **Official Information Act request relating to He Whenua Taurikura information**

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act (the Act), received on 4 July 2024. You requested:

*"This letter is a formal request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).*

### **1. Staff at HWT\*\***

- a. A recent media article indicated that there are five staff members at the HWT. Could you please provide a breakdown of these roles and their corresponding annual salary bands (e.g., \$50,000-\$60,000)?
- b. Do any of the staff currently hold Terrorism, Defence or Security qualifications?
- c. How were these staff positions filled? Was there a formal application process? If so, when and where was this process advertised?
- d. Are these staff members solely employed by Victoria University, or are they affiliated with other universities as well?
- e. Are the students all on site ? if not how often are they engaged with ?
- f. Given that HWT is described as a scholarship management entity, could you please explain the rationale behind having five staff members?
- g. Are staff conducting research that is funded by HWT

### **2. Location of HWT\*\***

- a. Is there a plan to rotate the location of HWT among different universities, or will it remain permanently at Victoria University?

### **3. Scholarship Awards\*\***

- a. Please provide details on the number of scholarships awarded to students each year, and the universities associated with these scholarship recipients (excluding personal names). HWT only have Masters and PHD advertised on the website. Are there others?

### **4. Scholarship Application Screening\*\***

- a. Could you clarify the process for screening scholarship applications? Are applications screened before being presented to the board, or does the board conduct its own screening?
- b. Is there a prioritisation of candidates for any reason ? characteristics - gender, race, culture for example ?
- c. If applications are pre-screened, who performs this screening? Is this process subject to peer review or external audit? For example how is bias managed.

### **5. HWT Associates\*\***

- a. Please outline the recruitment process for HWT associates.
- b. Was there a formal application process in place? If so, were these applications subject to peer review or audit? when were they advertised ?
- c. Do the HWT associates sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) as part of their involvement?
- d. Are the associates financially compensated for their contributions? If so, could you elaborate on the associated costs?

### **6. PCVE Qualifications\*\***

- a. Do any of the HWT staff or associates possess qualifications in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE)?
- b. If not have HWT engaged with someone who is qualified ?

7. Involvement of Postdoctoral People (Emma Rakete and Kyle Matthews) and Costs and Overseas Conferences and Travel\*\*

- a. Does HWT engage with researchers beyond PhD students, such as recent graduates like Ms. Emma Rakete and Mr. Kyle Matthews? If so, could you clarify the nature of their involvement with the program?
- b. Were these opportunities for Ms. Rakete and Mr. Matthews publicly advertised?
- c. Are there are post doctoral researchers with HWT?
- d. Does HWT fund overseas conferences and travel for its staff, associates, or collaborating researchers? If so, could you provide details on the associated costs, the expected outputs or deliverables resulting from this travel/research/projects, and the selection process for such funding?

8. Security Oversight

- a. Could you describe the oversight mechanisms in place to ensure HWT's research focus aligns with or is at least learning about national security priorities? terrorism?
- b. Do any staff have experience or qualifications in Security, Defence or Policing ?
- c. Are the students provided access to security scholars/experts?
- d. Is HWT funding the 'Crime Media Culture journal? if so why ?

<https://defsec.net.nz/2024/06/15/understanding-counter-terrorism-needs-serious-scholarship/>

9 Financial Audit

- a. Has there been a check and balance on spending at HWT this year ?  
If so when?
- b. Can HWT still meet its objective to fund PHD and Masters? Or is it restricted due to the costs related to the above matters ?

Thank you for your time in responding to these queries.  
While there are a few questions they should be very straight forward.  
Thank you

Catherine”

For ease of reference, I have added sub-numbering under each part of your request.

I believe part 1 (except 1c in regard to Director positions), 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of your request are more closely connected to the functions of the Victoria University of Wellington. Accordingly, I have decided to transfer these parts of your request to the Victoria University of Wellington under section 14(b)(ii) of the Act. Part 1c in regard to Director positions and part 2 will remain with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and you can expect a response in due course.

The Victoria University of Wellington has the usual timeframes under the Act from receipt of this transfer to make a decision on your request.

Nāku noa, nā



Amy Teague  
Manager, Ministerial Services