



# Term of Reference (ToR) Document

Marion - Pilot project Conversational companion  
for Government information

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09 July 2024

Draft

# Background & Objective

This pilot project is a collaboration between Microsoft, Callaghan Innovation and supported by the Whāriki Māori Business Network, with the goal of developing a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) and demo-ready version for presentation at the AI Summit on 11 September 2024. The MVP will explore the concept of creating a single AI-based service that provides information on publicly available government services through a “conversational companion” experience.

An AI-based conversational companion will provide accurate and referenceable information about New Zealand’s public services through natural language conversations. It will use Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG) techniques to enhance the accuracy and reliability of the generative AI model by fetching facts from website sources.

Whāriki will play a crucial role in this project by contributing specific use cases, particularly related to government support and funding opportunities for Māori businesses. This collaboration aims to ensure the cultural relevance and appropriateness of the content, providing a comprehensive and valuable tool for all users.

## Scope

- Limiting the scope to business value-added content from a selection of government websites.
- Featuring multimodal input and output (e.g., text and speech) and multilingual support (e.g., English and text-based Te Reo). This pilot will be developed using Microsoft’s te reo Māori language model. For clarification, Te Reo speech will not be used, as Microsoft’s speech technology is currently only about 75% accurate and there are issues with dialect variations, making it not accurate enough to meet Whāriki and the Māori communities’ cultural expectations.
- Developing and deploying Azure OpenAI services and PowerApps.
- Developing a user interface for accessing and interacting with indexed data.
- Providing a seamless user experience through effective UX/UI design, including customisation options for appearance, voice, talking speed, etc.
- Ensuring the security and integrity of the indexed data.

## Timeline



now  
Initiate project and planning, establish governance and project teams



to mid July  
Secure resources and confirm budget



to mid Aug  
Configure and train LLM  
Build front end app



to mid Sep  
MVP launch ready

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Microsoft

- **Technical Expert Advice:** Providing guidance on the technical aspects of the project.
- **Access to Technology:** Offering access to necessary technologies required for project execution.
- **Computation Credits:** Supplying computation resources and credits to facilitate project development.

## Callaghan Innovation

- **Project Management:** Overseeing project planning, execution, and delivery.
- **Security Oversight:** Ensuring all security protocols are followed and the data is protected.
- **Technical Engineer:** Providing technical expertise and development support.
- **UX/UI Design:** Designing a user-friendly interface for accessing and interacting with the indexed data.
- **Culture and Te Reo advice:** Provide culture advise and support the bi-lingual testing of the MVP.

## Whāriki Māori Business Network

- **Use Case Contribution:** Providing specific use cases, particularly related to government support and funding opportunities for Māori businesses.
- **Cultural Support:** Assisting in the cultural relevance and appropriateness of the content.
- **Testing and Feedback:** Participating in the testing phase and providing feedback on the user experience and functionality.
- **Resource:** up to 4 hours a week to support the project.

# Communication Plan

- **Weekly Meetings:** Regular updates and progress tracking through weekly meetings.
- **Project Management Tool:** Utilising a project management tool for task assignment and tracking – MS Planner.



- **Reporting:** Monthly progress reports submitted to all parties.

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