



REGIONAL HUB PROJECTS FUNDING SCHEME

Application Criteria for Project Funding

This document should be read in conjunction with the Budget Calculator (RHPFS-4). Further information is contained in the document RHPFS-3 Project Applications – Reading between the Lines: Guidance for Applicants.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The vision for Ako Aotearoa: National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence is to create and support the best possible educational outcomes for learners in the tertiary sector. To achieve this vision, the focus will be on supporting projects which provide examples of good practice, identify critical success factors and develop practical action-oriented suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of tertiary teaching and learning practices.
- 1.2. Projects designed to assist organisations and their educators will include research that extends our knowledge about tertiary teaching and learning in New Zealand and develop initiatives that bring together: research findings, examples, case studies and other resources for educators. Projects could include: development of new or expansion of existing networks to support teaching and learning practices and strategies.
- 1.3. Proposals are welcomed from individuals or groups from any New Zealand tertiary education organisation. We are keen to make the application process as straightforward and as collegial as possible. Prospective applicants are encouraged to discuss their ideas with their Regional Hubs at an early stage of their thinking. Hub Coordinators/Operations Managers will assist in the development of applications as required (although they will not be involved in the selection of successful applicants).
- 1.4. Cross-organisational and across different sections from within the tertiary sector collaborations are encouraged and may be given priority over applications from educators at a single organisation. This is in line with current tertiary education priorities. International collaboration will be supported if it has the potential to enhance teaching and learning practices in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 1.5. Project categories are as follows:
 - small scale, regionally or locally focused development initiatives
 - exploratory research projects

2. Criteria

- 2.1. Proposed projects will be judged against the following criteria:
- Ako Aotearoa goals – the extent to which teaching practice will be improved and learning enhanced, including the potential number of learners who will be influenced. Does the project have the potential to inform/enhance teaching and learning practices across the sector?
 - Project Coherence – the extent to which the activity or research addresses the aims and objectives stated in the proposal
 - Method/design – appropriate method/design for the objectives set. What (if any) learnings from previous projects have been identified? What existing, relevant literature has been cited?
 - Partnerships – the opportunity for participants/organisations to benefit from collaboration with other departments/tertiary education organisations
 - Ethics – all ethical issues have been appropriately addressed
 - Capability – the capability of the project team to carry out their proposed project
 - Sharing good practice – clear outcomes with appropriate plans for sharing and embedding insights learned. How project insights are to be shared across the tertiary sector

3. Project Funding

- 3.1. Each Hub has annual funding allocated to support projects initiated each year. Funding for each project will normally total between \$1,000 and \$10,000 (GST exclusive).
- 3.2. Where applications are successful, a funding agreement will be developed with the organisation employing the project leader.
- 3.3. Project costs may include:
- Staffing (research assistance, administration support)
 - Equipment purchase or rental (only reasonable costs which impact directly on the project will be considered) *
 - Communications (tolls teleconferences, internet etc)
 - Printing/Postage
 - Travel – team members and visiting speakers (if required) **
 - Functions/Workshops
 - Room hire
 - Speakers costs
 - Equipment hire
 - Consumables and refreshments
 - Other items (to be specified)

* All equipment costs must be approved by the Hub before purchase. If equipment purchased is to be retained for continued use after the completion of the project, only partial funding may be approved. It is our strong preference that where possible specialised equipment is leased rather than purchased

** Travel is for the purposes of undertaking the project and precludes international travel, travel to conferences, etc.

- 3.4. It is expected that Hub project funding will not be subject to institutional overheads.
- 3.5. Applicants should advise if they have also applied for funding from other sources including other Ako Aotearoa funds. Ako Aotearoa is happy to partner with other funding bodies providing there is clear value added by the funding Ako Aotearoa will provide. However, if there is a possibility of a conflict of interest, then this should also be indicated in the application.
- 3.6. There will be an agreed time limit for completion of the project. For smaller projects this limit will not normally exceed six months.

4. Process for Submission of Proposals:

- 4.1. Electronic project applications should be submitted on the application form (RHPFS-2) available on the Ako Aotearoa website (www.akoatearoa.ac.nz). The Hub Projects Selection Panel reserves the right not to fund projects that do not meet the required criteria.
- 4.2. If no member of a project team is an experienced project manager/researcher, the application should also include the name of such a person who is prepared to mentor the team throughout the project. Mentor expenses incurred should be included in the project budget.
- 4.3. Project applications should include:
- the names of all project participants, including the project mentor (experienced project manager / researcher) and their institutions if applicable
 - project description
 - project goals, objectives, expected outcomes, background and rationale
 - potential benefits to tertiary teaching and learning practices
 - how the project will contribute to the Ako Aotearoa vision
 - One hundred word or less summary of project objectives, in plain English, for a general audience to be placed on the Ako Aotearoa website
 - an outline of proposed method/design
 - Fifty words or less summary of project method/design, in plain English, for a general audience to be placed on the Ako Aotearoa website
 - any relevant references
 - an analysis of project risks and mitigation processes in place
 - expected project outputs
 - initial plans for dissemination, including on Ako Aotearoa website
 - a proposed timeline including start and finish dates
 - details of how any ethical and compliance issues will be addressed (Organisations that do not have an appropriate committee may be required to seek ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of an agreed institution)
 - a declaration of any conflict of interest and how this might be managed
 - the New Zealand-based component of international collaboration where relevant (Ako Aotearoa encourages international collaboration where this will enhance benefits for tertiary teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Note that attendance at international conferences will not be financially supported*)
 - indication, if relevant, that this project will contribute to postgraduate research, for example masters or doctoral study.
 - funding required (Complete and attach the project budget calculator)
 - sign-off by an appropriate person authorised to do so on behalf of the project leaders employer
- 4.4. Proposals should be submitted to your regional hub. The Hub Coordinator/Operations Manager will monitor all applications to ensure eligibility.

Applicants whose project proposals do not meet the criteria will be advised and may be encouraged to amend and resubmit their proposal. As noted in Section 1 above, part of the role of the Hub Coordinator/Operations Manager is to assist in the development of the application and to encourage early contact.

- 4.5. The Hub Coordinator/Operations Manager will prepare a list of eligible applications, including further relevant information which will be helpful to the selection panel. As part of the selection process, applicants may be contacted and asked to provide additional information or to discuss the proposal. Once the Selection Panel has met, all applicants will be advised whether or not their project application has been accepted for funding. If a project is accepted, final project negotiations, including Milestone Report and funding payment dates will then take place and a Funding Agreement signed with the organisation hosting the project.
- 4.6. The Regional Hub Projects Selection Panel will comprise two or more suitable persons as deemed appropriate by the respective Hub Advisory Groups.
- 4.7. There is a necessity to maintain consistency for projects undertaken through Ako Aotearoa. Project leaders are assured that policies and practices will be the same nationwide. In order for the projects to complement not duplicate each other, Ako Aotearoa Hub staff will facilitate connections with other project teams whose project could inform theirs.

5. Project Reporting and Evaluation

- 5.1. All projects will be required to provide progress reports against agreed milestones. Specific requirements will be stipulated in the funding agreement. Templates for these reports are available on the Ako Aotearoa website.

6. Project Outputs

- 6.1. All project applications will identify formats in which findings will be produced. Examples are: a summary, guidelines, resource sheets, one-pagers etc.

7. Project Dissemination

- 7.1. It is a requirement that outputs from projects will be shared on the Ako Aotearoa Website.

Material published on the Ako Aotearoa website is, by default, done so under the Creative Commons 3.0 Attribution – Non-commercial – Share-alike New Zealand license. The license is explained on the following URL:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/sa/3.0/na/>

If you wish to publish content under a different license, you will need to discuss this with Ako Aotearoa.

- 7.2. In conjunction with the Knowledge Manager, the project team will be offered a space under *Projects* on the Ako Aotearoa website which they can use as a project management tool, for example to share files, hold discussions with team members and seek feedback on aspects of their project if they wish
- 7.3. Other forms of project dissemination may include:
 - Involving colleagues during the project in activities that enhance their understanding of the project

- Presentations of the project findings to colleagues in the team members' and other tertiary education organisations
- Conference presentations of the project findings
- Peer-reviewed publications
- Other dissemination activities initiated by the project participants

7.4. The Ako Aotearoa website has further details and a section on frequently asked questions will be developed in due course.