

# INNOVATION FUND POLICY | KAUPAPA AUHAHA

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to outline the operational framework, funding criteria, and process for the Te Arawa Fisheries Group ('TAFG') Innovation Fund ('the fund'). The fund is designed to foster sustainable fishing and aquaculture and drive Māori economic growth through the principles of kaitiakitanga and tikanga Māori. It aims to build capacity in the oceans sector by fostering strong partnerships and supporting projects that align with our mission and strategic goals.

## 2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- Encourage the development of initiatives that align with the collective efforts of Te Arawa and the Te Moana-a-Toi aquaculture group.
- Support innovations in technologies for sustainable and modern practices.
- Support educational and training initiatives that integrates mātauranga Māori with contemporary marine practices.
- Support projects that focus on restoration, preservation and conservation efforts ensuring the long-term health of our moana.
- Empower iwi development by supporting projects that improve the economic, cultural, and social resilience of iwi members and communities.

## 3. FUNDING SCOPE AND ELIGIBILITY

The fund offers funding of up to \$40,000 each fisheries financial year. Applicants can apply for up to \$10,000 but is not guaranteed the full amount. To be eligible for funding applicants must meet all requirements of the below criteria:

- (a) The applicant must be a registered trust, company, limited partnership or education institution.
- (b) The applicant must have an affiliation with one of our 10 constituted Te Arawa iwi. Or, in the event the applicant has no direct affiliation, a letter of support from one of the 10 elected representatives of the Te Kotahitanga o Te Arawa Waka Fisheries Trust board should accompany the application.
- (c) Projects must align with one or more of the Trust's strategic objectives of;
  - i. Innovations for sustainable aquaculture development;
  - ii. Innovations for sustainable fisheries, taiao restoration, preservation and conservation initiatives;
  - iii. Capacity building in mātauranga Māori and marine sciences;
  - iv. Community-based or educational initiatives promoting innovation, sustainable marine resource management; and/or
  - v. Economic resilience and growth within the Te Arawa rohe.
- (d) Projects must demonstrate a commitment to the principles of kaitiakitanga, underpinned by tikanga Māori.
- (e) The proposed project must predominantly benefit the Te Arawa community and ensure widespread, lasting positive impacts across the wider community.
- (f) Projects must clearly outline specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART) goals and objectives, with a clear timeline, measurable outcomes, and feasible implementation strategies.

## 4. FUND PROCESS

The process for applying to and participating in the fund includes the following stages:

- (a) **Application:** Applications are open from 1 October each year and close 30 April each year. Applications may close prior to 30 April if all funding is allocated before this date. Applications should be submitted through the online portal, however hard-copy applications can be provided upon request.
- (b) **Application Review and Consideration:** TAFG will review submissions and determine successful applicants. Applications are accepted/funded on a first-in first-served basis provided they meet the required criteria and are approved by TAFG. For the avoidance of doubt, meeting the criteria does not mean your application will be successful.
- (c) **Notification:** Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within 20 business days of submission.
- (d) **Funding:** Successful applicants will receive the full agreed funding directly into the verified bank account provided within five business days of notification.
- (e) **Project Implementation:** Successful applicants must proceed with the implementation of the project according to the approved plan. Any changes to the plan must be communicated to TAFG as soon as reasonably possible.
- (f) **Reporting Requirements:** Successful applicants are required to submit a Final Report, using the approved template, within 10 business days of the project's completion or no later than 31 days after the end of the financial year the funding was received. The report must include an evaluation of the project's outcomes in relation to the agreed goals.
- (g) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Ongoing communication and monitoring between TAFG and project recipients are required to ensure that project objectives are being met. This includes tracking progress, addressing any issues that arise, and adjusting plans as necessary. TAFG places a strong emphasis on accountability, transparency, and the long-term sustainability of projects.

## 5. GENERAL TERMS

The Fund is not intended to provide financial assistance for:

- Salaries or fees for persons involved in the project, hui or kai
- Completed projects.
- Marae infrastructure for appliances such as whiteware (including but not limited to dishwashers, fridges, freezers, ovens etc.), utensils or other disposable material assets.

The maximum financial contribution available in a financial year is \$40,000 total, up to \$10,000 per project per year (no gst). If the proposed project doesn't require the full available funds and only partial funds are required, the project cannot claim the remaining funds. If funds are unclaimed, they cannot be claimed in a different financial year.

Successful applicants must provide evidence of a verified bank account (bank statement, bank screenshot, verified bank slip etc.) upon request. Evidence must show the bank name, account name and account number. Payment will not be made until this evidence is provided.

If the funding recipient fails to provide a Final Report, the recipient may be required to return any or all the Financial Contribution that has been paid (in part or full), any outstanding portion of the Financial Contribution may be withheld and eligibility for further funding may be withdrawn.

The funding recipient shall agree to the Te Arawa Fisheries Group using their project for promotional material, subject to meeting mutual privacy and confidentiality concerns.

We reserve the right to not offer participation in this fund in any subsequent years.

Unclaimed/unrequested funds not allocated during the financial year will remain property of TAFG and redistributed according to business requirements.

## 6. REVIEW AND UPDATE

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in supporting the strategic objectives of the Te Kotahitanga o Te Arawa Waka Fisheries Trust, Te Arawa Fisheries Group and the needs of Te Arawa iwi members.

Any amendments to the policy require Commercial Board approval.

Version	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1.0	1 October 2025	CB 04/09/2025	Initial policy

