

National
SCIENCE
Challenges

AGEING
WELL

.....
Kia eke kairangi ki te
taikaumātuatanga

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Expression of Interest Guidelines

October 2018

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

1. Overview

The mission of the Ageing Well *Kia Eke Kairangi ki te Taikaumātuatanga* National Science Challenge (the Challenge) is “to push back disability thresholds to enable all New Zealanders to reach their full potential through the life course with particular reference to the latter years of life”. This Request for Proposals (RfP) seeks research for the period 2019-2024 that will deliver on the Challenge’s mission.

The Challenge, through extensive consultation and discussion with partners, stakeholders, advisors, and the research community, has identified two major research areas (or “Focus Areas”), each with a small number of research priorities. Through this RfP, the Challenge intends to identify one research programme to deliver on the respective outcome statement in each of the two Focus Areas, using the best science and the best research team for that work. The Challenge has identified a series of principles for the way the research programmes will operate, which it wants to see applied so the required outcomes can be delivered.

A single *integrated, multidisciplinary* and *multi-institutional* programme of research is sought for each Focus Area. There is total funding of up to NZ \$5M (GST exclusive) available initially to support each of the two research programmes, and it is intended that each programme will receive approximately equivalent funding.

The proposal submission and assessment process involves four stages:

- investigator briefings, open to all interested parties;
- submission and review of an Expression of Interest (open to all eligible organisations);
- face-to-face meetings with representatives of selected Expressions of Interest; and
- submission and review of a Full proposal.

Both Expression of Interest and Full proposals will undergo peer review. Following review of Full proposals, it is anticipated there will be a negotiation stage with potentially successful applicants, during which the Challenge leadership may seek alterations to the proposed research plan, programme organisation, team members and/or deliverables, prior to final contracting of the two research programmes.

Applicants should note that there are defined start (as soon after 01/07/2019 as feasible) and end (31/12/2023) dates for the research contracts. No extension of the end date can be considered.

Legal entities that are New Zealand-based research organisations with a track record in the research area of the Challenge are eligible to apply.

Final decisions about funding will be made by the Challenge at its sole discretion.

Intellectual Property Rights related to unsuccessful proposals will be respected (not utilised). Each member of the peer review panel will sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA).

2. Application Procedure

In the interest of transparency, and to inform future planning by potential applicants, this RfP contains details related to both Expression of Interest proposals and Full applications.

This RfP is being issued in advance of confirmation by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment of future Challenge funding. Any changes to the anticipated budget of Ageing Well may be reflected in the funding available through this RfP.

Legal entities that are New Zealand-based research organisations with a track record in the research area of the Challenge are eligible to apply.

The Request for Proposals and Expression of Interest application template are available on the Ageing Well website (www.ageingwellchallenge.co.nz).

A proposal must be submitted as a PDF via the host organisation’s Research Office, or equivalent. Submission indicates host institution acknowledgment of the proposal. If you have a query about the submission process, please contact ageingwell@otago.ac.nz.

The Challenge reserves the right to decline to process or review any proposal, at Expression of Interest or Full application stage.

Step 1. Investigator briefing (Roadshows)

The Challenge will host Roadshows (see table), which will include investigator briefings to explain expectations and process, and to answer questions. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to attend a Roadshow. Briefing material and FAQs will also be posted on the Challenge’s website.

Roadshows (which will include Investigator briefings)

Date and time	Place	Venue
22/11/18; 09:00 – 11:00	New Plymouth	Kaumatua Service Providers Conference
28/11/18; 10:00 – 12:00	Auckland	University of Otago, Auckland Centre, Queen St
30/11/18; 10:00 – 12:00	Wellington	Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision
07/12/18; 09:00 – 11:00	Dunedin	Otago Museum
10/12/18; 13:00 – 15:00	Christchurch	Christchurch School of Medicine

Potential applicants should register their interest in attending a briefing through the Challenge website; details will be posted on the website, and invitation emails will be distributed through the Challenge’s existing distribution lists.

Step 2. Expression of Interest

Applicants are required to submit an Expression of Interest on the appropriate application form, available from the Challenge website. The Expression of Interest content, review process and assessment criteria are explained later in this document.

Expressions of Interest must be received at ageingwell@otago.ac.nz before 12:00 noon, on 17/12/2018. Late submissions cannot be accepted unless there has been express permission from the Challenge Director; such permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

All Expressions of Interest require sign-off by the host institution.

Expression of Interest assessment outcomes and invitations to submit full applications will be notified by 14/02/2019. All applications will receive written feedback from the assessment process.

Step 3. Feedback from Challenge

Applicants invited to submit a Full proposal can expect detailed feedback. For each of the selected Expression of Interest proposals, up to five representatives will be required to meet (either in person or by video-conference) with the Challenge's leadership in the week starting 25th February 2019, to discuss expectations and directions for the Full proposal.

Step 4. Full Proposal

Invited applicants only may submit a Full proposal. Full proposals must be received at ageingwell@otago.ac.nz before 12:00 noon on 02/04/2019. Late submissions cannot be accepted unless there has been express permission from the Challenge Director; such permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

All Full proposals require sign-off by the host institution.

Applicants should note that they will have an opportunity to respond to any comments contained in the written appraisals sought from reviewers. These rebuttals must be submitted by the nominated deadline.

Summary of Key Dates:

Registration for Investigator briefing meeting	By 05/11/2018
Expression of Interest due	17/12/2018
Outcomes of EoI assessment notified	14/02/2019
Meeting with Challenge leadership	Week starting 25/02/19
Full applications due	02/04/2019
Rebuttal period opens	17/04/2019*
Rebuttal due	26/04/2019*
Outcomes notified	29/05/2019

* Tentative - TBC

3. Background

The Ageing Well *Kia Eke Kairangi ki te Taikaumātuatanga* National Science Challenge (the Challenge) is one of the eleven National Science Challenges, and was initiated in 2015. Its mission is: *to push back disability thresholds to enable all New Zealanders to reach their full potential through the life course with particular reference to the latter years of life*. For 2019-2024, the Challenge seeks to build from its early successes to deliver on its mission.

After extensive consultation and discussion with partners, stakeholders, advisors and the research community, the Challenge has determined it wants to support research in two Focus Areas: *Health and Wellbeing in Ageing*, and *Ageing and Māori*. Through this RfP, one integrated, multidisciplinary and multi-institutional programme of research is sought for each Focus Area.

Each focus area is defined by an outcome statement and associated research priorities.

Focus Area: Health and Wellbeing in Ageing

Outcome Statement

All older people are given opportunities and tools to support their physical/functional and mental abilities, and the interaction of these capacities with their own unique environments. This may include reshaping of physical environments, so these environments encourage engagement and participation.

Research Priorities

Research which supports and develops:

- Design and delivery of culturally relevant interventions for health promotion, that support autonomous daily functioning and wellbeing through sustaining physical and mental capacity, and social connectedness.
- Design and delivery of effective and efficient health and social services for older people to enhance access, quality and provision of services, while addressing multi-morbidity and complex geographic, social, family, financial and housing circumstances

Focus Area: Ageing and Māori

Outcome Statement

Positive Māori ageing is supported by evidence from Māori-led research undertaken in collaboration with key stakeholders (e.g. Māori service providers and communities). Research derived evidence is used to inform policy makers and programme funders on how to best support programmes that work for older Māori and their whānau and which prevent compromised ageing.

Research Priorities

- Equitable access to culturally appropriate services and respectful relationships between Māori and service providers/professionals. This includes end-of-life care and supporting whānau carers.
- Social connectedness, including having strong cultural connection, being valued, having purpose, making a contribution, inclusion, mitigating loneliness, and the use of technology to stay connected.
- Research with Māori who are ageing well (e.g. physical, mental, cognitive health and wellbeing) and ageing well over time (e.g. longitudinally).

- Structural, social, and environmental determinants of positive ageing, in particular housing, and also land, financial stability, transportation, proximity to services, and places of meaning.
- Cultural roles and responsibilities within whānau and communities as kaumātua and leaders, including the intergenerational transfer of knowledge and legacy.
- Data (e.g. demographic information) to identify current issues for Māori and also provide information to inform long term future planning for a growing ageing Māori population.

There are particular features that research in the Ageing and Māori Focus Area must include, to meet the expectations of Māori stakeholders and communities:

- Ageing and Māori research needs to be Māori-led. It should be consistent with Māori research principles (e.g. self-determination, benefit for Māori, transformation of power relationships, validity of Māori worldviews, the importance of cultural heritage, Māori are located at the centre, strengths-based).
- Ageing and Māori research projects should incorporate a kaumātua-centred lens with kaumātua actively participating as members of the research team and throughout the research process (e.g. as advisors and participants) to provide a kaumātua perspective at all levels and over time.
- Research should be multidisciplinary (in keeping with the overall requirements of the Challenge).
- Research should make a strong and consistent contribution to building Māori research capacity and capability.
- Researchers should work with providers and communities to ensure that research is undertaken that leads to findings being used to implement change and inform programming.
- Research supports the goals of Vision Mātauranga, in particular unlocking the innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources, and people.

Cross-cutting themes

The Challenge has also identified four cross-cutting themes that will underpin all research in 2019-2024, including Focus Area research programmes.

Equitable Outcomes for Diverse Communities

Proposals are *required* to articulate how the research programme will support equitable outcomes for New Zealand's diverse communities. For this purpose, equity is defined by the absence of avoidable or remediable differences amongst groups of people, when such differences are viewed as unjust or unfair, and where the groups may be defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically.

Delivering on Vision Mātauranga

Proposals are *required* to demonstrate how research programmes will deliver on the Vision Mātauranga policy.

Two further cross-cutting themes, considering intergenerational relationships and taking a lifecourse approach are not considered mandatory for the Focus Area research programmes, but based on stakeholder recommendations, they are considered important, and applicants are urged to consider how their work might incorporate the themes.

Principles of Operation for Research Programmes

The Challenge has determined a set of principles for how the two funded research programmes should operate, to ensure work is carried out in line with the Challenge's ethos, and will have the greatest chance of delivering success for the Challenge.

- *Engagement.* Research programmes will include and/or work closely and sustainably with stakeholders and end-users, so they can influence research direction and drive implementation. This includes, but is not limited to, an expectation of significant co-creation of research plans and partnership in research delivery.
- *Involvement of Māori.* Māori will be involved at all levels, including stakeholder interactions, research leadership, planning and delivery, and knowledge transfer approaches.
- *Innovation.* Research plans will show innovative, high quality, and potentially transformative research. There is space for high risk/high return work.
- *Leadership.* Plans will require a recognised leader who will have overall responsibility for the programme, including coordination of activities between collaborators and delivery of the research plan.
- *Best team.* The research team will have the requisite experience and expertise to deliver the planned research programme. The team will be multi-disciplinary and must be multi-organisational, include stakeholders and/or end users, and have national reach.
- *Coordination and Coherence.* The research programme will have strong coordination, with a coherent plan for research delivery.
- *Outcome focus.* The research plan will articulate how transformation will be achieved, in relation to the Focus Area outcome statement, and provide a meaningful performance evaluation framework that will be used to provide evidence of progress towards achieving the outcome.
- *Outcome equity.* The research plan will propose solutions that deliver equity of outcomes for groups, including Māori and Pacific peoples, or make major contributions to addressing existing inequalities.
- *Research workforce development.* Research programmes will support the acquisition of relevant research skills, including for those working in community settings, when relevant.

4. Research Proposal Requirements

Research Scope

Proposals must be for an integrated, multidisciplinary and multi-institutional programme of research¹ in one of the two Focus Areas.

The research programme must address one or more of the Focus Area research priorities and make significant contribution to the Focus Area outcome statement. It is not a requirement that all research priorities be covered by the proposed research programme; rather the proposed research programme should focus on the priority or priorities where the applicants consider they can have the most meaningful impact. Research methodology, research team, and partners/stakeholders engaged in the research should be determined by the applicants and should provide the best opportunity to achieve the proposed impacts.

Proposals will need to explain how the research programme will contribute to the Challenge's two **mandatory** cross-cutting themes: *equitable outcomes for diverse communities* and *delivering on Vision Mātauranga*. The proposal should also show consideration of the two **recommended** cross-cutting themes: *considering intergenerational relationships* and *taking a lifecourse approach*.

In addition, a proposal should show how the research programme will operate according to the principles set out by the Challenge.

General Requirements for an Expression of Interest Proposal

Proposals must be in English or te reo Māori. If the proposal is in te reo Māori a translation in English must be provided. Such translation is in addition to the specified page limits.

Proposals that do not comply with page limits or page format, or that are incomplete, will not be accepted.

One electronic form of the proposal should be submitted. The document must be submitted as a single PDF that includes all sections and CVs.

No other attachments will be accepted. Letters of support or references are not required at the Expression of Interest stage.

Expression of Interest Content

The Expression of Interest will provide information on:

- the Focus Area and research priority/priorities addressed;
- the research aims and objectives;
- contribution to the Challenge's cross-cutting themes, including the Vision Mātauranga policy;
- path to impact, including the intended outputs and the stakeholders and next users who will be involved with the research programme;
- a brief outline of the proposed research design;
- a timeline, showing how the aims and objectives will be managed during the contracted period;

¹ Research, in this RfP, is used broadly, to include working with and alongside partners and stakeholders, and knowledge exchange and transfer processes. For the sake of clarity, funding cannot be used to implement a process or product, but can be used for implementation research and/or evaluation research.

- expertise, with standard CVs for up to five research leaders, and a list of all other named investigators², with an indication of their expertise relevant to the current proposal; and
- an indicative budget.

Full proposal content

Submission of a full proposal will be by invitation only, and will follow face-to-face discussion by key members of the research team (up to 5 members) with Challenge leadership starting the week of 25/02/2019. The full proposal template will be provided to invited applicants, and require information on:

- a detailed explanation of the research objectives and why those are relevant in terms of the Challenge’s mission, the Focus Area outcome statement and research priorities, and the Challenge’s cross-cutting themes;
- background and context for the proposed work, showing both the need for it in New Zealand and its positioning internationally;
- the research plan and design, and methodological detail;
- the expected outputs and impacts of the research programme, with a timeline;
- how key stakeholders and end-users will be engaged, and who those individuals/groups are, making clear their contribution to research leadership, planning, delivery, or participation, and role in future implementation or action;
- the potential for knowledge exchange and the processes that will support uptake and action on research findings;
- milestones and performance monitoring framework that the programme will use ensure delivery of the proposed outputs and impacts
- the mix of expertise, and organisations, and stakeholders comprising the research team;
- evidence of the Challenge-defined programme operating principles in the programme plans, and an overview of how the programme will be managed;
- a fully costed and justified five year budget; and
- New Zealand Standard CVs for all named investigators.

Should a Full proposal be accepted by the Challenge, then a funding agreement will need to be agreed with the Challenge at the Challenge’s sole discretion. Such agreement will require appropriate institutional sign-off and will include matters to be agreed with the Challenge such as intellectual property rights, publication rights, and confidentiality arrangements.

² Named investigators includes research team members as usually understood, but also includes any individuals from stakeholder/end-user organisations who are closely involved in the research programme. All “named investigators” will need to have their contribution explained and submit a standard CV at Full proposal stage.

5. Budget

A total funding pool of approximately \$10M (GST exclusive) is initially available for allocation across the two Focus Areas. It is expected that two research programmes, of near equivalent value (about \$5M each), will be supported, one for each Focus Area.

Funding will be available for an immediate start, from July 2019. Contracts must finish by 31 December 2023, and time extension is not permissible.

6. Deliverables

The funded research programmes will be required to meet the need for particular deliverables. These include, but are not be limited to:

- attendance at and participation in the annual Ageing Well symposium and other events
- regular video-conference meetings with Challenge Directorate and Challenge science leaders
- six monthly written progress reports
- annual reporting to meet MBIE requirements

7. Expression of Interest Assessment Criteria

Each criterion is scored out of 7. To be eligible for invitation to full proposal, a score of at least 4 must be achieved for each criterion.

A. Fit with RfP weighting 25%

Score 7

The applicants have convincingly demonstrated that the proposed research fully aligns with the selected focus area and its priorities, and the Challenge's cross cutting themes. The proposal clearly conveys a thorough understanding of the requirements expressed in the RfP.

B. Impact weighting 30%

Score 7

The path to impact is coherently and convincingly outlined. The likely impacts are significant in relation to the Focus Area outcome statement. Influential stakeholders are positioned to contribute to achieving the impacts.

C. Design and Methods weighting 20%

Score 7

The proposed research design is excellent. It is difficult to suggest improvements. The design is clearly appropriate to the aims and objectives and there is confidence that the work is achievable and in accordance with the proposed timeline.

D. Expertise of the Team weighting 25%

Score 7

The research team collectively has an outstanding record of delivery of research outcomes, and of disseminating research results through appropriate channels. The team has excellent topic based knowledge and experience relevant to the proposed research. They have exemplary relationships with significant and relevant stakeholder/partners /end-users, including communities where relevant, which manifests as clear involvement in the research planning, delivery, and use of research findings.