
Royal Society Te Apārangi

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TE APĀRANGI

Who are we?



We support New Zealanders to explore, discover and share knowledge

- Te Apārangi fosters a culture that supports science, technology, and the humanities by:
 - raising public awareness, knowledge, and understanding
 - advancing education
- We encourage, promote, and recognise excellence
- We support infrastructure for professional development
- We maintain a Code of Professional Standards and Ethics
- We provide expert advice on important public issues

MARSDEN FUND

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Applying to the Marsden Fund

<https://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/marsden/>

January 2025

What is the Marsden Fund?

Named after Sir Ernest Marsden

Funded by the Government

Governed by the Marsden Fund Council

- Chair: Professor Gill Dobbie

Changes for 2025

New Terms of Reference have been established for the Fund.

Two new assessment criteria have been added:

- *All proposals must demonstrate how their research could be of economic, environmental or health benefit to New Zealand*
- *Proposals should demonstrate a clear rationale for this research being undertaken in New Zealand*

Approximately 50% of the Fund will go towards supporting proposals which have the potential to result in economic benefits to New Zealand

The Social Sciences and Humanities panels have been disestablished

These changes have led to some alterations in the proposal structure

All applicants will have the option to submit a narrative CV

Refer to the guidelines for a complete list of the changes!

What does Marsden support?

- Top-level research by top quality investigators
- Research projects that are:
 - Investigator-led (not mission-led) and discrete
 - At the international cutting edge
 - Exploring new ideas that could lead to benefit to NZ

Categories of grants

	Maximum amount per year (ex GST)	Duration	Cycle
Fast-Start (emerging researchers)	\$120k	Up to 3 years	Two stages: February (EOI) and June (Full)
Standard (open to any career stage)	Varies by panel (\$240-\$320k)	Up to 3 years	Two stages: February (EOI) and June (Full)
Marsden Fund Council Award (open to any career stage)	\$1 million (may fund 0-2)	Up to 3 years	One stage ONLY: Full proposal due February

2025 Timeline

- **26 Feb** Closing date for first round
(noon) *Check your institutional closing date!*
- **8 May** Invitations to second round
- **19 June** Closing date for full proposals
- **TBA:** Results Announcement
(Early Nov)

Eligibility

- Open to New Zealand-based researchers:
 - Fast-Start grant: Contact PI full-time in New Zealand
 - Standard grant and Marsden Fund Council Award: Contact PI at least 0.5 FTE in New Zealand
- Applicants can only be a PI on **one proposal per year** (and an AI on one more)
- PI exclusion rule applies across **all grant categories**
- See guidelines for further criteria

Assessment Criteria

Research

- Proposals must use an interdisciplinary approach to significantly expand research possibilities and ambition through new researcher and institutional links (Council Award only)
- Proposals must have the potential to lead to quantifiable impacts because of the proposal's novelty, originality, insight and ambition
- Proposals must be rigorous, and should have a basis in prior research and use a sound research method
- The research team must have the ability and capacity to deliver.

Benefit

- Proposals must demonstrate why the research could be of economic, environmental, or health benefit to New Zealand (**NEW CRITERION**)
- Proposals should demonstrate a clear rationale for the research to be undertaken in New Zealand (**NEW CRITERION**)
- Proposals should develop research skills in New Zealand, particularly those at the post-doctoral level and emerging researchers.

Vision Mātauranga

- Proposals must consider the relation of the research to the themes of Vision Mātauranga and, **where relevant**, how the project will engage with Māori.

What is quantifiable impact?

Quantifiable impacts can be defined in various ways including how the research will:

- contribute to shifting the understanding, and advancing methods, theory and application across and within disciplines;
- lead to economic, environmental or health outcomes for New Zealand beyond its contributions to knowledge and skills development.

First Round

Closes in **February**

Fast-Start and Standard	Council Awards
<p>Submit an EOI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One page proposal• Assessed by panels	<p>Submit a Full Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10-11 page proposal• Assessed by MF Council

Second Round: Submission

Opens in **May**

Fast-Start and Standard only

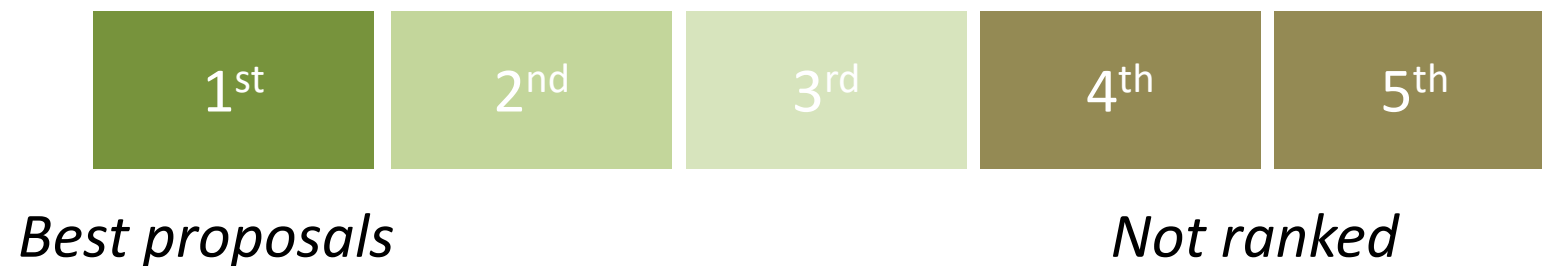
- By invitation only
- Five to six page full proposal, including background, aims, and methods sections
- Assessed by panels

Second Round: Assessment

- Reviewed by *expert* referees
- Applicants can respond to referee reports
- Proposals are assessed together with referee reports, and applicant responses

Feedback: EOI round

After the **EOI round**, unsuccessful applicants will be told their proposal's ranking, expressed as **quintiles**.



Unsuccessful Fast-Start applicants who are ranked in the 2nd and 3rd quintiles can ask for qualitative feedback.

What are my chances?

- Success rate in 2024 was 11.2%
(Standards: 10.6%; Fast-Starts: 12.1%; MFCA: 12.5%)
- 113 proposals were offered funding, out of 1013
- As Fast-Start success rates are higher than Standards, eligible researchers are encouraged to apply to the Fast-Start category

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Tips for producing a quality proposal

January 2025

Planning your proposal

- Know the literature
- Carry out preliminary work
- Choose your team carefully: fit for the job; compatible; skilled (but no window dressing); opportunities for skills development

Note: Cannot change PIs, AIs at full round

Planning your proposal

- Build your CV – recent performance important
You have the choice of a standard CV or a narrative CV
- Use your support: Research Office; successful applicants; recent panellists; HoD / manager
- Familiarise yourself with the Trusted Research Guidance
Consider any dual use/sensitive technology aspects of your research

Panel choice

- Biomedical Sciences
- Cellular, Molecular and Physiological Biology
- Earth Sciences and Astronomy
- Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour
- Economics and Human & Behavioural Sciences
- Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences
- Mathematical and Information Sciences
- Physics, Chemistry and Biochemistry

Read the panel definitions carefully. Research the panellists. Seek advice
Humanities and Social Sciences panels have been disestablished

The Marsden Portal

- Proposals are submitted via a web-based portal
- Log-in details available from your Research Office or from marsden@royalsociety.org.nz for independent researchers
- **Make sure you look at the portal early – don't leave logging in until the last minute!**
- Instructions available in the guidelines

What sections are required in an EOI?

- Title
- 200-word summary
- **Vision Mātauranga:** theme(s) and rationale (200 words)
- 1 page abstract of proposed **research** (address the research criteria here) plus 3 pages of references
- 1 page **benefits / impact** section
 - Tick boxes to identify potential benefits (address the benefits criteria here)
 - *Economic*
 - *Environmental*
 - *Health*
 - 400 words to describe potential benefits and rationale
- 1 page Roles and Resources (Who does what? What do you need?)
- Personnel / FTE table
- CV – one for each investigator (option of standard OR narrative CV)

Title and Summary

- Choose a title that is descriptive of your research (avoid quirky titles)
- Your 200–word summary will be sent out to prospective referees should you make it to the full round
 - It should clearly communicate the core question and methods of your work to panellists as well as expert referees

Vision Mātauranga

*“Proposals must consider the relation of the research to the themes of Vision Mātauranga and, **where relevant**, how the project will engage with Māori.”*

EOI round:

- Identify which, if any theme(s) apply
- A comment box is provided to explain your rationale – **whether you indicate any Vision Mātauranga themes or not**

Proposed Research

Hook – engage the reader!

- Use headings, e.g. background, aims, methodology
- Ensure diagrams are useful and legible (if used)

Clearly state...

- Aims/hypothesis/discovery (risk is OK!)
- Importance
- Novelty
- Timeliness
- Methodology

Research plan should be...

- Robust
- Realistic (plan a budget)
- Informative
- Accurate
- Appropriately referenced (not just to your own work)

Benefits (NEW)

Clearly state...

- The rationale for the research to be carried out in New Zealand
- Ways in which the proposed research has the potential to lead to economic, environmental or health benefits to New Zealand
 - Even if your research has environmental or health impacts, also consider the ways in which it could lead to economic* benefits
- The comparative advantages of a New Zealand-based team
- The benefits that could accrue with the research being carried out in New Zealand

Although the research may not have the potential for short-term benefits, there may be longer-term benefits or possible impacts that you can consider.

* Council will monitor awarded grants to ensure approximately 50% of the Fund supports proposals that have the potential to result in economic benefit to New Zealand

Roles and Resources

A chance to convince the panel that you have thought about the practical requirements of your work plan

Do:

- Discuss who will specifically do what (with a justification of your planned FTEs, including any students or post-docs)
- Discuss any resources specific to this project
- Include ethical or regulatory considerations (Fast-Start and Standard)

Do not:

- Take lots of space to describe the background and expertise of the PI(s) and AI(s) in general terms
- Use this space to extend the research or benefit sections

Roles and Resources – Fast-Start

You should be involved in your own independent research – not just part of a larger group's programme

Do:

- **Provide evidence for how the proposed research will support your independent research career**
You will need to convince the panel of your independence!
- Discuss opportunities for your career development
- If you choose a Mentor, describe their role

Mentors:

- Should advise on project management, career development and professional development. Usually someone from your organisation
- Should **not** contribute to research or experimental design, analysis and interpretation etc.

General tips

Consider your audience

Make your writing clear, accessible and engaging

- Keep sentences short – make each one count
- Define abbreviations and use sparingly
- Avoid repetition (in particular, avoid repeating your summary in the background section)
- Avoid hype
- Avoid unnecessary jargon and technical terms
- Check for spelling and grammatical errors

Follow the rules

- Respect page limits
- Don't alter font size, line spacing or margin size from the templates
- Include titles and author names for sources listed in the reference list and CVs

Formatting breaches can result in your proposal being ruled ineligible – make sure you read the guidelines!

Vision Mātauranga resources

Detailed resources on how to include Vision Mātauranga in your proposal are available from our guidelines and website

Consider if the following categories apply to your research:

- Research with no specific Māori component
- Research specifically relevant to Māori
- Research involving Māori
- Māori-centred research
- Kaupapa Māori research

Marsden Fund Council Award

For projects that are interdisciplinary in nature (i.e. cannot be assessed by one panel alone), with larger teams

- Proposals submitted at the **First Round** deadline in February
- **Full proposal length, plus:** Three pages on specific methodology of the proposed research, two pages addressing criteria.
- **NEW:** Public title and public summary (300 words) required
- One additional assessment criterion on interdisciplinarity
- Assessed by **Marsden Fund Council**
- Best applications sent to expert referees for review
- Simply larger Standard proposals are not likely to succeed
- **Refer to MFCA guidelines**

Before submitting

- Make sure you have completed all sections carefully – research section, benefits section, and Vision Mātauranga (if appropriate)
- Get people to read your proposal (including non-specialists)
- Download a PDF to check:
 - Are the correct CVs uploaded?
 - Are all the sections in the right place and successfully converted to PDFs?
 - If images are included, are these displayed correctly?
 - Has the text been converted without loss of formatting?

More questions?

- Guidelines and FAQs should answer most questions. Available on our website:
 - <https://www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/marsden>
- Talk to your Research Office
- If all else fails: email marsden@royalsociety.org.nz

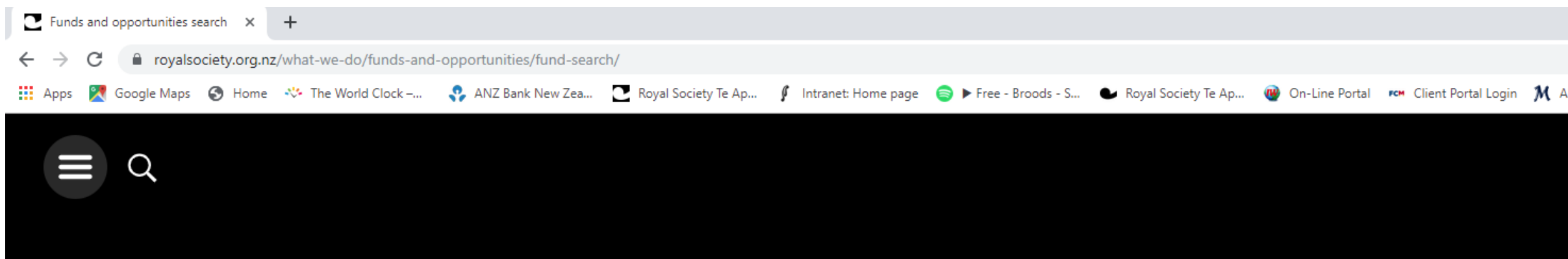
Other Funding Opportunities

What is on offer from Royal Society Te Apārangi?

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Funds and opportunities search



Home > What we do > Our funds and opportunities > Funds and opportunities search

Funds and opportunities search

Use this search tool to find funds and opportunities you could apply for

I am a:

-- Select Option ▾

-- Select Option --

- Student (school)
- Postgraduate
- Early Career Researcher
- Researcher
- Teacher

I am seeking:

Post Graduate ▾

OUR FUNDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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> Marsden Fund

> Catalyst Fund

> Science Teaching Leadership Programme

> CREST Awards

> Powering Potential

> Charles Fleming Fund

> Raewyn Good Study Award for Māori and Pasifika Social Science Research

> RHT Bates Postgraduate Scholarship

Research Funding at Royal Society Te Apārangi

- **Marsden Fund** (\$78m p.a.): *Supporting excellent investigator-initiated research*
 - Marsden Fund Council Award, Standard and Fast-Start grants
- **Catalyst Fund** (\$2.5m p.a.): *Advancing global science partnerships for New Zealand*
 - Catalyst: Influence, Leaders and Seeding
- **Tāwhia te Mana Research Fellowships** (approx. \$27m p.a.): *Supporting individual Fellowship and scholarship opportunities*
 - Mana Tūāpapa Future Leader Fellowships
 - Mana Tūānuku Research Leader Fellowships
 - Mana Tūārangi Distinguished Researcher Fellowships
- **Human Frontier Science Program** (International award): *Funding high-risk, interdisciplinary, intercontinental, collaborative, fundamental life science research, with a philosophy of “science without borders”*
 - Long-term and Cross-Disciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships
 - Program and Emerging Investigator Grants

Other Royal Society Te Apārangi opportunities

- **Schools and Teachers;** *Providing teachers and students with learning and leadership opportunities*
 - Science Teaching Leadership, Powering Potential, Talented Schools Travel Award
- **Postgraduate Awards;** *Supporting with study scholarships and travel awards*
 - Raewyn Good Study Award for Māori and Pasifika Social Science Research, RHT Bates Postgraduate Scholarship, New Zealand Ecohydraulics Trust Travel Award, Falling Walls Lab New Zealand, Sir Hugh Kawharu Masters Scholarship
- **Early Career Researchers;** *Supporting with research fellowships and travel awards*
 - Falling Walls Lab New Zealand, World Data System Data Stewardship Award, James G. Hay Travel Award
- **Researchers;** *Supports with research funding, fellowships and awards*
 - James G. Hay Travel Award, Charles Fleming Senior Scientist Award, Charles Fleming Award for Environmental Achievement, Hutton Fund, Skinner Fund, Charles Fleming Publishing Award

Ngā mihi

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