

## PUBLIC INTEREST JOURNALISM - PROJECTS

### NZ MEDIA FUND

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approves funding of up to:

- \$1,919,913 to SunPix Ltd, for *Tagata Pasifika*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

#### OVERVIEW

1. In January 2021 Cabinet agreed to draw down \$55m over the next three years (2021 - 2023) from the tagged contingency set aside by Cabinet for broadcasting initiatives. This funding will be administered by NZ On Air to support the production of public interest journalism including Māori and Iwi journalism that is relevant to and valued by New Zealanders.
2. [General Guidelines for the PIJF](#) were published in April 2021. The principles set out in [the Cabinet paper](#) have informed the design of the Public Interest Journalism Fund (PIJF). NZ On Air collaborated with Te Māngai Pāho on the design and delivery of the fund.
3. The PIJF is structured to support journalistic capability across three funding pillars: Projects, Roles, and Industry Development. This third round of the Public Interest Journalism Fund sought applications to the **Projects** and **Roles** pillars of the fund. Information for this [Sep/Dec funding round](#) outlined the assessment criteria and funding priorities to applicants.
4. Applications for **Project funding** (circa \$7m allocated) were sought in the following areas:
  - News and Current Affairs Projects – including children’s and youth news
  - Investigative journalism projects
  - Projects that improve the overall quality, provision and/or sustainability of PIJ
5. The criteria for **Targeted Roles** in this round (circa \$2m allocated) were developed in response to industry feedback and learnings after Round 2 which had focused purely on content-creation roles. Round 3 sought to encourage roles that *supported* the production and sustainability of high-quality public interest journalism but weren’t necessarily content creating.
6. This round invited applications from a number of journalism and current affairs ‘legacy’ projects annually funded by NZ On Air baseline factual funding, and projects recently funded via one-off additional Government funding.
7. These projects were considered in a fully contestable process under the same eligibility and assessment criteria as other applications. With an additional circa \$4m from NZ On Air baseline factual funding added to this PIJF round to acknowledge that it was likely that some returning journalism projects would be funded and that accommodations should be made to maximise the number of new projects that could be supported via the PIJF. This decision was made following stakeholder consultation from the sector in February and was signalled to the sector in [our response](#) to the stakeholder report (page 6).

8. The 'legacy' projects for consideration in this round include *Tagata Pasifika* for consideration by the Board and six others considered and approved by SIC including *Q + A*, *Newshub Nation*, *The Hui*, *Stuff Circuit and Newsroom Investigates*, and *Kea Kids News*.
9. There was a two-stage application process for Round 3. Applicants were first asked to submit five-page proposals by Thursday 30th September, which were individually assessed by panellists. A hui was then held on Friday 8th of October. Shortlisted applicants then submitted full proposals by Tuesday 26th of October. Following further individual assessment, a hui was held on Tuesday 2nd November to decide on the funding recommendations outlined in this paper.
10. The assessment panel for the PIJF Round 3 included:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- **Raewyn Rasch** (Ngāi Tahu) - NZ On Air Head of Journalism. Former General Manager Māori and Pacific programmes at TVNZ, executive producer of Seven Sharp, producer of Fair Go and Marae Investigates, TV and radio journalist.
- **Glenn Usmar** - Associate Head of Funding (Systems), NZ on Air. Former Programme Manager for Rialto Channel, Sky TV, and Programmer at TVNZ.
- **Gabriel Thomas** - Journalism Manager, NZ On Air. Former executive producer of The Nation and Firstline, producer Newshub Live at 6.
- **Fairooz Samy** - Journalism Funding Advisor, NZ On Air. Current Media Studies PhD candidate at Victoria University of Wellington.

11. [REDACTED] The assessment panel recommended 35 for funding at a total of \$9,254,433. These projects are listed in full in 5.8 Staff Investment Committee / Delegated decisions.

## GENERAL ASSESSMENT & STAFF OPINION

*Tagata Pasifika* SunPix Ltd \$1,919,913

Key People	Role/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

### Synopsis

12. This is a returning current affairs series, 51 x 23' and 2 x 90' for 9:30am Saturdays on TVNZ 1 with a repeat play on Sunday morning. *Tagata Pasifika* presents current affairs, talanoa, sports, issues, events, and entertainment relevant to the Pacific Islands communities. It has additional distribution on Whakaata Māori (Māori Television), tpplus.co.nz, Prime, and Pasifika TV.

**General Assessment**

13. Since 1987, *Tagata Pasifika* has provided a forum for Pacific viewpoints and a reflection of the varied communities who make up Moana Pacific in Aotearoa New Zealand. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

14. The primary platform for *Tagata Pasifika* is TVNZ. It is also broadcast on Whakaata Māori on Sundays at 4.30pm and on Prime on Mondays at 4.30pm giving it a potential reach of more than 100k per week. The Prime placement started last October and the producer reports the network is pleased with its performance in the slot. *Tagata Pasifika* also airs on Pasifika TV (PCBL) currently beaming to 20 South Pacific Broadcasters.

15. Highlights of the 2021 season have included being the first NZ media to cross live to Samoa during the Samoan election crisis, technically producing the world-wide television broadcast of the Government Dawn Raids Apology, continuing to broadcast throughout COVID-19 lockdowns and scoring more than 70,000 views on the *Te Maeva Nui* (Cook Island festival) on TP+.

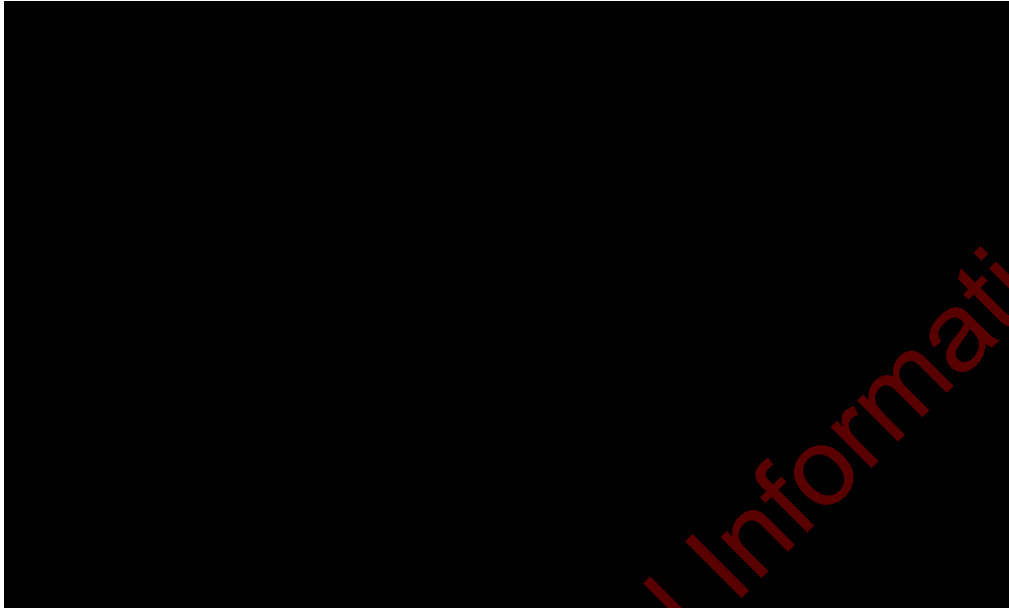
16. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

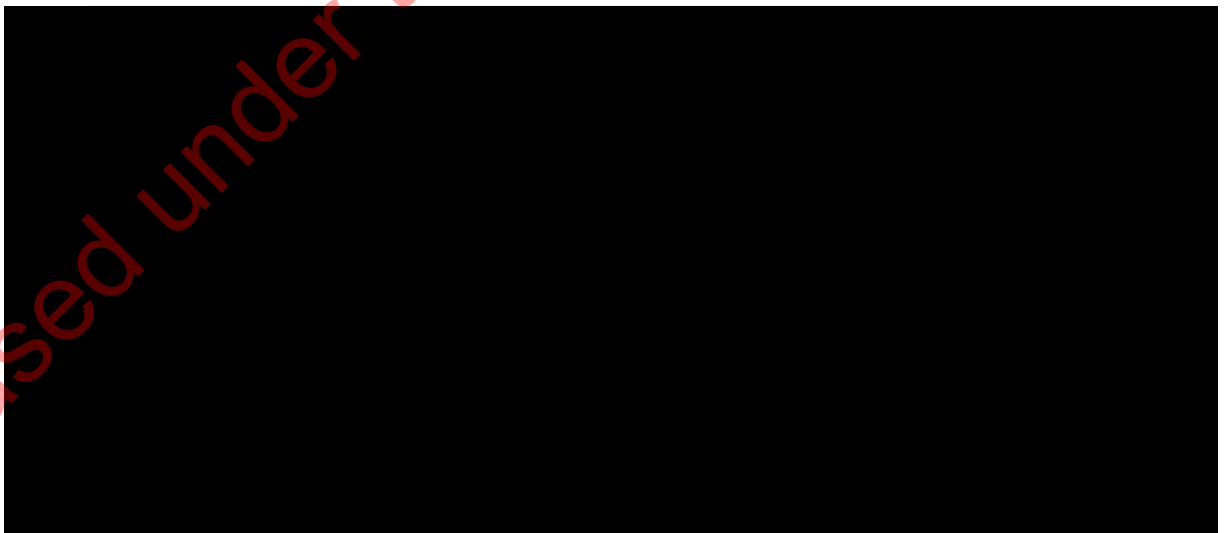
17. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

18.



19. One story that demonstrates the impact and importance of *Tagata Pasifika* in its community and via its reach on social media is that of Junior Tofa, a young Samoan boy who became trapped in New Zealand during lockdown and then contracted rheumatic fever. Requiring \$65,000 for urgent heart surgery neither the New Zealand nor Samoan governments would take responsibility for him, and a Give-a-Little page was set up. The campaign had little traction until *Tagata Pasifika* ran his story and within four days, the goal had been surpassed. It now sits at \$78,132. The story was not picked up by other media.
20. *Tagata Pasifika's* demographic profile for linear television is strongest in the 60+ and 50-59



21. The linear broadcast is supplemented by extra daily news on [tplus.co.nz](http://tplus.co.nz) which has 47k subscribers. The site's advanced search capability provides audience access to a *Tagata Pasifika* archive resource from the last 10 years with more than 4,000 stories online. SunPix has been further bolstered by the funding of digital text journalists for [tplus.co.nz](http://tplus.co.nz) from PIJF Round 2 Role funding and the funding of two digital-first documentaries (*Ifoga* and *Maisuka*) from PIJF Round 1.

22. The format remains the same as 2021 with two 90' special episodes celebrating Pacific music with the Pacific Music Awards and Pacific achievement and excellence with the SunPix Pacific People's Awards now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year. Despite COVID-19 the 2020 Pacific Music Awards live-stream of 2.5 hours was viewed by more than 62k. While awards shows do not generally sit within the criteria for the PIJF, it was decided their cultural value in celebrating stories of Pacific success could be seen as vitally important and of public interest to Pacific audiences.
23. While anchored by a live studio-based format, the show in 2022 will continue to demonstrate currency by crossing to outside broadcasts from events that engage its audience. It will also continue to focus on Pacific languages especially Realm languages (Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau) which are the most vulnerable.

24. [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

#### Staff Opinion

27. SunPix has built a collaborative network of content providers in the Pacific to ensure it can engage with local reporters both here and in the Pacific. This has been particularly important during COVID-19 lockdowns in covering such events as the Samoan constitutional crisis and elections.

28. *Tagata Pasifika* has one of the most experienced teams in Pacific journalism. [REDACTED]

29. SunPix contributes to the growth of Pacific Journalism and has a relationship with the Pacific Co-operation Foundation and has hosted interns from Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, PNG, and Tonga and also takes interns from the AUT School of Communication Studies and Southern Institute of Technology. It is also one of the partners in the *Te Rito* industry development project to host journalism cadets in 2022. *Tagata Pasifika's* contribution to journalism extends well beyond the minutes on screen.

30. [REDACTED]

31. [REDACTED] staff believes the programme's reach via social media in particular is an important indicator of a programme that remains relevant and engaging to its target audience. S [REDACTED]

32. Staff also note the positive addition of Prime as another broadcast partner for content alongside TVNZ, Pasifika TV and Whakaata Māori, further strengthening *Tagata Pasifika's* strong multi-platform offering.

33. [REDACTED]

34. *Tagata Pasifika* continues to provide a vital service to its communities, demonstrated by how Government agencies relied on it to inform Pacific communities during the COVID-19 crisis and turned to it to help with the Dawn Raids Apology Broadcast. It negotiates the delicate balance between various ethnicities, Pacific geo-politics, multiple languages, and serious issues facing Pacific People all while engaging its audiences with traditional warmth, humility, and positivity. **Funding is recommended up to \$1,919,913.**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Released under the Official Information Act

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