

AGENDA ITEM 5.5

PUBLIC INTEREST JOURNALISM FUND – ROUND 6

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board **approves** funding of up to:

- \$2,019,190 to Sunpix for *Tagata Pasifika 2023*
- \$1,719,407 to NZME for *Te Rito 2023* [REDACTED]
- \$1,114,672 to Radio New Zealand for *RNZ Asia Unit* for one year [REDACTED]

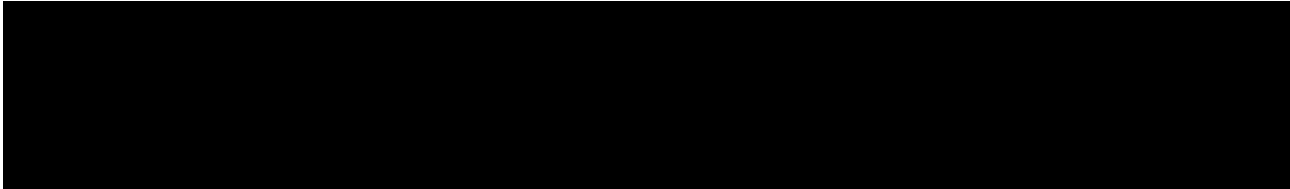
Three applications recommended for total funding of up to \$4,853,269

BACKGROUND

1. In January 2020 Cabinet agreed to draw down \$55m over three years (2021-2023) from the tagged contingency set aside by Cabinet for broadcasting initiatives. This funding is 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. The [General Guidelines](#) were updated in March 2022.
3. The PIJF supports journalistic capability across three funding pillars: Projects, Roles, and Industry Development.

OVERVIEW

4. The sixth round of the PIJF sought applications across all three pillars of the fund. NZ On Air earmarked \$10m for this round but given the large number of applications, lifted the pūtea to \$12m. We received 59 applications with a total funding request of \$17,833,071.
5. There remains one final round of the PIJF which will open in January 2023 with circa \$3m left to allocate.
6. Building on funding already distributed in the previous four rounds, the Round 6 criteria focused on funding that supports the sustainability, capability and capacity of public interest journalism in Aotearoa.
7. Given the constrained pūtea, prior allocations and expected demand, media entities were able to make separate applications under each of the three pillars but the total number of proposals per applicant were limited to:
 - One Project application
 - One Industry Development application
 - Maximum of 2 Roles (across both Targeted and Content Creation role categories).
8. Applications to Round 6 opened on 1 September and closed on 20 September at 4pm. Recommendations in this paper were decided at an assessment hui on 14 September.
9. The assessment panel for Round 6 included:
[REDACTED]



- d. **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.
- e. **Gabriel Thomas** – Journalism Manager, NZ On Air. Former executive producer of *The Nation* and *Firstline*, producer *Newshub Live at 6*.
- f. **Dr Fairooz Samy** – Journalism Funding Advisor, NZ On Air. Recently graduated from Victoria University of Wellington with a PhD in Media Studies.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT & STAFF OPINION

Tagata Pasifika 2023

Sunpix

\$2,019,190

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work

Synopsis

- 10. Sunpix is applying for funding to continue producing the Pasifika current affairs programme *Tagata Pasifika* for 2023.

General Assessment

- 11. *Tagata Pasifika* has been covering Pasifika news and current affairs on TVNZ since 1987, telling stories about Pasifika communities here in New Zealand and throughout the Pacific.
- 12. 2022 was an important year for *Tagata Pasifika* as it continued providing COVID-19 information to vulnerable Pasifika communities, as well as showing its depth in covering news stories such as the Tonga volcanic eruption and Samoan election controversy.
- 13. The expected output for 2023 is 52 episodes – 49 with a duration of 22.5’ and three with a duration of 69’. Content includes current affairs, talanoa (panel discussions and interviews), sports, events and entertainment relevant to Pasifika communities in New Zealand. The three extended specials will cover the *Pacific Music Awards*, Sunpix’s own *Pacific People’s Awards* and *Te Maeva Nui*, the Cook Islands Cultural Festival.
- 14. Pacific languages are a priority for *Tagata Pasifika*. All nine Pacific language weeks are highlighted, and interviews and stories run in Pacific languages whenever the talent feels most comfortable speaking them rather than English.
- 15. In 2022 *Tagata Pasifika* has its first run on TVNZ 1 at 9:30am on Saturday and been replayed on Sunday morning. It is also replayed on Prime at 4:30pm Monday and on Whakaata Maori at 4:30pm Sunday and is available on TVNZ+.



16. *Tagata Pasifika* is also viewed around the Pacific on Pasifika TV, which is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and is currently shared by 20 South Pacific broadcasters.
17. Recognising how many people now access their news and information online, Sunpix launched TP+, which houses video from *Tagata Pasifika* but also provides additional news, sport, entertainment and community coverage throughout the week. The PIJF funds two junior journalists for TP+, along with a trainer/mentor for them.
18. [REDACTED]
19. [REDACTED] *Tagata Pasifika* will continue to be broadcast on TVNZ 1 at 9:30am Saturdays, and it will be simulcast as a livestream on TP+. It will remain available on TP+ and TVNZ+ after the live broadcast and livestream. The replays on Prime and Whakaata Māori will remain the same.

- [REDACTED]
21. The applicant is planning a major revamp of the website, and this will include creating a separate section for *Tagata Pasifika* full episodes, like the section it currently has for another Sunpix programme funded by NZ On Air, *Soul Sessions*.
22. Sunpix currently promotes *Tagata Pasifika's* broadcast through its social media channels, and this will continue, with the addition of promoting TP+ as another place to watch the programme.
23. For 2023, Sunpix proposes to continue the same format and presenters, and the same focus on issues that affect Pasifika communities – housing, health, poverty and education – as well as covering sports and entertainment. While travel has been curtailed by COVID-19 for the past two years, in 2023 Sunpix plans to do *Tagata Pasifika* stories from Tonga, Niue, Samoa, and the Cook Islands.

Staff Opinion

25. *Tagata Pasifika* is a valuable asset for the Pasifika community in New Zealand, telling Pasifika stories, and often using Pacific languages, in the mainstream media.
26. The programme is broadcast on multiple platforms and given the increasing importance of TP+ to the applicant, and their knowledge that their audience is increasingly online, this decision to switch the primary platform was seen as a positive one by staff. Moving away from linear alone to incorporating TP+ is an innovation that its hoped will help *Tagata Pasifika* reach a younger audience, who are also underserved by mainstream media in New Zealand.
27. [REDACTED] and it has agreed to the changes, including the simulcast plan. This decision means that *Tagata Pasifika* is exempt from the 30 June deadline decided by the Board at the September hui.
28. In terms of the value of the project, the change of platform adds another channel which will hopefully bring in a new audience, without giving up any of the current broadcast options. It means the PIJF can fund *Tagata Pasifika* for 12 months and gives the production company greater control over their own content.

29. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The programme provides regular current affairs to a specific and underserved audience. It is one of the very few examples of Pasifika language content in the mainstream media and one of the few places Pasifika audiences can see their own stories told from their own perspective.
30. *Tagata Pasifika* is a significant investment for the PIJF but continues to have a wide-reaching impact on Pasifika audiences both here and abroad by providing important public interest journalism to an underserved s.36(c) audience. **Funding is recommended up to \$2,019,190.**

Te Rito 2023

NZME

\$1,719,407

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work
[REDACTED]		

Synopsis

31. *Te Rito* is a 12-month journalism training programme developed using a Kaupapa Māori design. It is a collaboration between Whakaata Māori, NZME, Newshub, and the Pacific Media Network (PMN) and trained 24 cadets in its first year.

General Assessment

32. *Te Rito* was an unprecedented collaboration aimed at addressing the need for Māori, Pasifika, and diverse voice journalists by providing a training programme that is not available anywhere in Aotearoa.
33. *Te Rito* training draws on the expertise, resources, and language abilities of all four newsrooms with a view to building capability across the industry at large by investing into diverse trainees.
34. Having completed its first 12 months, NZME (on behalf of the other parties) is applying for a further year of funding to recruit and train a smaller cohort of cadets. The 2023 proposal applied for 15 cadets but stated that the ideal number of trainees would be 12. Though a minor reduction, the *Te Rito* team explained that limiting numbers to 12 would allow for a more even distribution of cadets amongst the newsrooms and better quality of care, mentoring, and support from the trainers, given that the need for a high level of pastoral care was one of the key lessons learned from *Te Rito 2022*. After a discussion with NZ On Air staff, it was decided that the application would continue with the understanding that, if funding were approved, the maximum number of trainee numbers would be set at 12 and an updated budget would be required.
35. The reduction in numbers (from 24 to 12) is a response to the lessons of *Te Rito 2022*, which found that a smaller number of cadets would enable more one-on-one training and be more manageable for the newsrooms.
36. The budget for *Te Rito 2023* has decreased to reflect the reduction in cadet numbers from 24 to 15, down to \$1,719,407 from the previous year's \$2,419,253. This total does not include a \$10k in-kind platform contribution from NZME.
37. *Te Rito 2023* would build on the learnings from its first year. An overview of the programme is as follows:

- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

38. A timeline for year two of the project was also included:

- Stage One (Jan-Feb 2023): Programme Manager and Administrator recruitment, review and confirmation of the Course Curriculum.
- Stage Two (Feb-May 2023): Kaiako (Head Trainer) recruitment, participant recruitment.
- Stage Three (June 2023 – June 2024): The 12-month cadet training unfolds.

39. The project's staff consist of:

- Kaihautū/Project Manager to oversee the programme.
- Kiri Āwhina/Administrator who is responsible for liaising between the newsrooms, coordinating the publication of cadet content, and organising training records, among other things.
- Kaiurungi/Trainer (x3 FTEs). They will include at least one reo fluent journalist and a Pasifika journalist. The reo-fluent kaiururangi will lead wananga and te ao cultural training. The Pasifika journalist will help facilitate Pacific cultural workshops.

40. The proposal argues that *Te Rito* has been successful on multiple levels. While cadets have learned an array of newsgathering and reporting skills, this knowledge exchange has gone both ways, with the newsrooms benefitting from a deeper level of indigenous whakaaro and perspectives around ethnicity and disability.

41. The cadets have cumulatively published hundreds of news stories across the four newsrooms. They have been particularly adept at presenting stories for social media platforms, where many Māori and Pasifika audiences are. Because of their geographic diversity, they have also been able to pitch and execute stories with strong regional focuses, which have performed well with regional communities.

42. *Te Rito* was designed and executed with tikanga and Kaupapa Māori as a foundational aspect. In service of this, the programme includes a fluent Reo-speaking trainer and a Pasifika trainer, in addition to the completion of a tikanga Māori component for cadets. Additionally, the proposal stresses that *Te Rito's* Kaupapa Māori environment and programme structure provide an appropriate learning environment for Māori participants and ensure a level of cultural safety for the cadets.

43. A benefit of the scheme is that cadets are paid a living wage while in the programme and gain useful contacts within the industry at the same time as building a professional portfolio.

44. The first year included a commitment from the scheme to extend an offer of employment to cadets who successfully completed the full programme, met industry standards, and who were compatible with the needs of the newsrooms. The second year will continue this expectation.

45. In Round 6 of the PIJF, applications for funding to employ *Te Rito* graduates were received from NZME, PMN, Newshub, and Radio Ngāti Porou.

46. *Te Rito 2023* is already garnering interest from prospective applicants. The scheme will endeavour to attract interest from applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds.

47. The criteria for selection includes Reo Māori and Reo Pasifika proficiency, employment compatibility with one of the partner organisations, and lived experience from an underrepresented community.

48. *Te Rito 2023* will continue to apply a tuākana-teina (senior-junior) approach to leadership. This strategy shifts the paradigm from leader authority to leader service. Every leader is responsible for the wellbeing and pastoral care of every trainee to ensure their physical, emotional and cultural wellbeing is protected in the demanding news environment.
49. The training modules will continue to cover key multimedia journalism skills and ethics, while employing a measurement framework that includes self-assessments and trainer assessments, feedback sessions, and one-on-one mentoring.

Staff Opinion

50. Assessors were unanimously in favour of this proposal, citing the scale of the project, the level of industry collaboration, the important need that it addresses, and the successful completion of the programme by all the cadets, some of whom have already been offered further journalism work.
51. One assessor noted, *“this project has proved to be the jewel in the crown of the PIJF with widespread approval. It is still the only large-scale training for Māori, Pacific and diverse-voice journalists, and until Te Pukenga sets up a programme with the new Level 5 Diploma in Journalism, there remains a need. 12 cadets seems to be a reasonable number, and while the budget remains high, the impact on the sector is significant.”*
52. Staff noted the overwhelmingly positive feedback from the participating newsrooms in their [Producer Reports](#), as well as anecdotally. All four organisations have said to staff that the cadets have provided invaluable perspectives and the level of collaboration involved has strengthened the relationships between them, ultimately in service of a more cooperative and thriving journalism workforce.
53. Staff felt that the unique Kaupapa of the project is one of its greatest strengths as it enhances whole newsroom environments and mitigates potentially exploitative or burdensome paradigms that can sometimes occur when the responsibility of representation and knowledge-building is placed too heavily on individuals with diverse/indigenous backgrounds.
54. Staff was also impressed by the quality of the PIJ content created as part of the programme, noting that the cadets' stories have had the additional benefit of uplifting regional news, as well as Māori, Asian, and Pasifika issues.
55. There was a question among staff as to why the proposal included five months for preparation when the programme has already been set up. Staff queried NZME about this delay and have received verbal confirmation that the timeline will be revised to shorten this lead-in period by two to three months
56. As noted above, *Te Rito* staff members have also confirmed with NZ On Air that they will reduce the cadet numbers from 15 to 12. [REDACTED] recommends funding up to \$1,719,407 **subject to a revised schedule and reduced budget.**

Key personnel	Title/s	Relevant Past Work

Synopsis

57. An RNZ editorial unit generating news and current affairs aimed at the country’s growing Asian community producing stories in Mandarin, Hindi and English.

General Assessment

58. The *RNZ Asia Unit* is a pilot programme to prove the viability of a news service meeting the needs of the Asian communities in Aotearoa. As the largest Pan-Asian communities in New Zealand, its first focus will be on Chinese and Indian communities, commencing in the lead up to the 2023 general election.

59. It will operate as part of RNZ News with its output integrated into coverage on RNZ National, RNZ online and through RNZ’s many content-sharing partners including ethnic media. It is a similar model to RNZ Pacific.

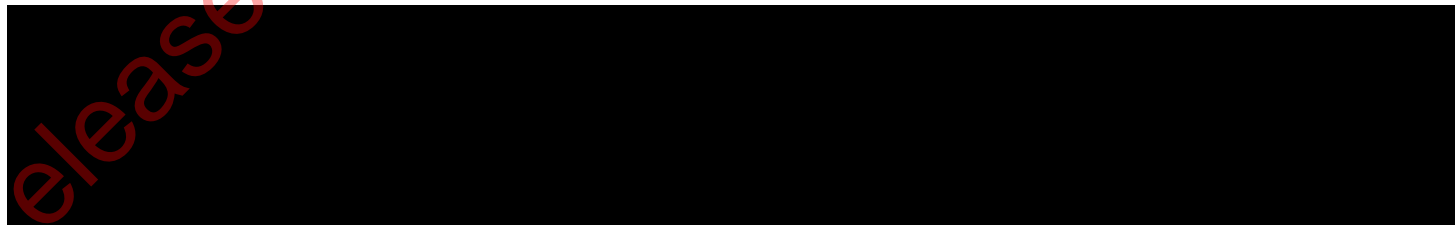
60. The outputs would be four stories a day plus translations, in English and Mandarin, as well as video pieces suitable for YouTube.

61. This proposal addresses what RNZ says is a need to serve a growing Asian community, some of whom do not speak English and rely primarily on overseas media in their native language.

62. The proposal gives in-depth analysis of the growing Asian population in Aotearoa New Zealand and the changing make-up of our country, with China our third most common birthplace, and India fourth after New Zealand and England. Northern Chinese (including Mandarin) is our fourth most spoken language behind English, Te Reo and Samoan; Hindi is fifth.

63. The most recent census figures (2018) show there are 250,000 Chinese-New Zealanders, with most living in Auckland. While the size of the community demonstrates its importance, RNZ says there is also a moral need to protect democracy that will also be supported by this proposal.

64. RNZ points to efforts by the Chinese Communist Party to shape the messaging Chinese people receive not only within China but internationally as well and says, *“While it is hard to be precise, there have been many concerns raised about the extent of the Party’s pressure and messaging within Aotearoa. This proposal is therefore partly based on the need to ensure a source of independent news for local Chinese.”*



67. The proposal draws heavily on the NZ On Air research report [Chinese and Indian New Zealanders' Media Use in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2021](#) and acknowledges RNZ will have to overcome a Chinese community reliance on Chinese social media sites such as Weibo and WeChat and a complete lack of audience interaction with New Zealand media.

68. To do this, RNZ plans to make all stories available to its three Chinese partner outlets, to use Weibo and WeChat channels to promote the Unit and to focus on YouTube which has strong Chinese engagement.
69. In terms of the Indian community the proposal points out it too is growing rapidly, with the last census showing 240,000 living mostly in Auckland.
70. RNZ points to NZ On Air research that shows while Indian communities feel well served by local ethnic media, they do not see themselves represented in mainstream media and want to see *'More than just dairy robberies and arranged marriages.'*
71. Currently, RNZ has 42 content sharing agreements with a range of outlets including local Chinese and Indian media and says it will also collaborate with the Asia New Zealand Foundation on the project including sourcing and sharing content. While it says the Centre is supportive in principle, a letter of support is not included in the proposal.
72. The *RNZ Asia Unit* would be structured with a senior manager overseeing two teams, one Chinese and one Indian.
73. The Chinese team would include two translators, two bilingual reporters and one fulltime videographer focusing on producing video stories for online and social media especially YouTube.
74. Content outputs for this team would be two to three new pieces of content a day around the election, voting and candidates along with two news stories translated to Mandarin. This would include one video news story a day. RNZ will also look at the feasibility of a podcast 5pm News bulletin in Mandarin. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].
75. The Indian team would have two, ideally bilingual, reporters and focus on producing content in English for both mainstream news and sharing with Indian media.
76. Content outputs would also be two to three new pieces initially focused on the election but spreading to issues of community interest and possibly regular podcasts.

79. The proposal notes that coverage of Te Tiriti issues by existing Asian-language media is limited and *RNZ Asia* would ensure Te Tiriti/Māori coverage is a priority stream within the translation service (Mandarin) and made available for Indian outlets.
80. RNZ says it is currently in a discovery process for a multi-lingual Content Management System (CMS) which would support the roll out of bilingual audio and text.

81. Apart from staffing costs, the proposal also covers a range of additional annual costs including:

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

83. The timeframe proposes kick off in early 2023 with teams ready to publish ahead of the 2023 general election.

Staff Opinion

84. This 18-page application provides a thorough analysis of the needs of a growing yet underserved Asian audience and proposes a comprehensive solution.

86. While the PIJF has made progress in engaging with ethnic media including Chinese and Indian outlets and has funded \$1,754,283 across six media companies, staff believes it has become clear that the scale and complexity of the issue requires a major trusted organisation such as RNZ to not only serve Asian audiences, but to support local ethnic media as well.

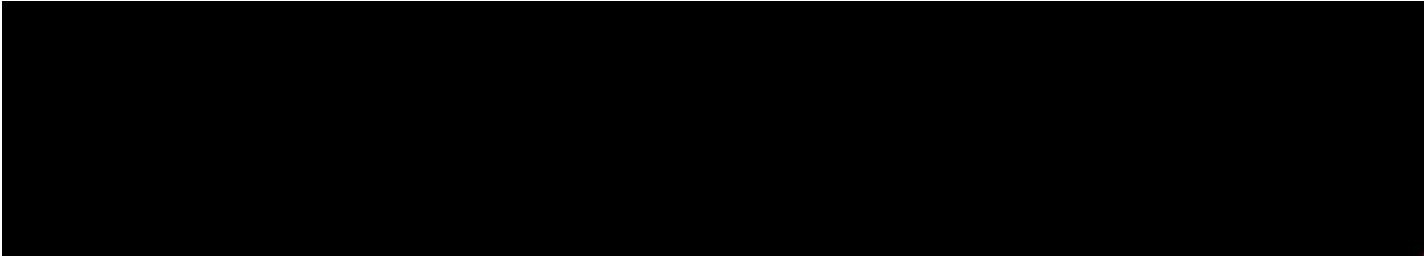
87. Staff believes RNZ is one of the few media organisations capable of undertaking the high level of diligence required to ensure the security of a news service that serves the Chinese community and its position as a State Broadcaster with a high degree of trust ensures the level of credibility required to engage this audience.

88. RNZ's radical content sharing policy already sees it providing stories to 42 other outlets making it the ideal platform to ensure *RNZ Asia* stories flow out into the wider media sector and hopefully to audiences. In that respect, *RNZ Asia* can support the widest possible range of media in New Zealand maximising the benefits of this public funding.

89. While the proposal talks to a two-year trial, staff has already pointed out to RNZ that the PIJF project pillar can only provide one year funding. RNZ has provided an annualised budget.

92. Staff believes the size of the team is also reasonable given the relentless nature of the news cycle and the need to ensure content is delivered consistently.

93. While the establishment time frame is quite long, the complexity of this *Unit* and the probable recruitment challenges have been considered. Staff also believes the general election provides an ideal launch time when hopefully audiences are more receptive to finding new sources of trusted information.

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95. While the proposal notes support in principle from the Asia New Zealand Foundation, staff believes confirmation of this should be provided prior to contracting.
 96. Staff believes RNZ has thoroughly canvassed the issues and complexities of serving Asian audiences demonstrated by their understanding of how important YouTube could be in reaching Asian audiences on social media without having to traverse the possible censorship issues associated with Weibo and WeChat.
 97. Staff believes the Asian community is significantly underserved by New Zealand media, and that it is within the PIJF's remit to help seed what could become a vital service enabling a large sector of society to fully engage in our democracy. **Funding of up to \$1,114,672 for one year,** 