



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Freshwater Improvement Fund

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

2020

New Zealand Government

Disclaimer

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About this guide

This guide explains how to apply to the Freshwater Improvement Fund (the FIF). It outlines:

- the eligibility and assessment criteria for funding
- the expression of interest and funding process
- the information you will be asked for if you apply.

Who it's for

This guide is for anyone interested in seeking funding through the Freshwater Improvement Fund, for a project to improve the management of freshwater bodies in New Zealand.

How to use it

Use this guide together with the expression of interest form for the FIF.

We suggest you read through this guide and the expression of interest form before you begin filling out the documentation. This will help ensure you have the right information available, and help you answer the questions.

Contact us

You are welcome to contact the Freshwater Investment team if you have any questions about the fund.

Phone: 022 175 5840

Email: fif@mfe.govt.nz

About the fund

As part of its response to COVID-19, the Government has established the multi-agency Jobs for Nature Programme. Within this, the Ministry is continuing to administer the Freshwater Improvement Fund.

The fund supports initiatives which improve the management of freshwater within quality and quantity limits. This means improving the way we share and use water, as well as taking care with what we allow to flow into waterbodies.

The term water body refers to rivers, lakes, streams, groundwater and wetlands.

The fund supports projects that will:

- make a significant and measurable improvement to rivers, lakes, streams, groundwater and wetlands
- support recovery from COVID-19.

The fund can support projects at different scales and over varying timeframes. This could include one-off, short-term projects up to one year, as well as longer-term projects taking up to five years. The fund will also help communities adapt to new ways of managing and using freshwater within the limits they set for water quality and quantity.

The focus of Jobs for Nature funding is to create and support employment through improving environmental outcomes. This means that proposed initiatives will be judged in part on their ability to provide employment. Successful applicants will be required to report details of the employment they plan to and have created. This is a significant departure from historic reporting requirements and may require additional internal information gathering by successful projects.

Targeted funding

The fund is focused on where we can get the greatest impact from the funding available. That's why we're giving priority to vulnerable lakes, rivers, streams, groundwater and wetlands that have not yet reached a tipping point – this is where it becomes much more costly and more difficult or impossible to return waterbodies to good health.

This includes funding for:

- reduction of sediment eroding from the land
- wetland construction and restoration
- stream reinstatements
- estuary protection and restoration
- restoration of fish passage
- job creation
- building capacity and capability in freshwater management and restoration.

Jobs for Nature Investment Framework

The Jobs for Nature reference group has developed an [investment framework](#) that may help you shape your proposal. The framework includes information on the key principles the programme promotes, and includes information on employment priorities, environmental scope, benefits of partnerships, importance of financial and delivery aspects of projects, and risk management.

Encouraging collaboration

Improving New Zealand's freshwater management on the scale required will need groups and funders to work together on individual projects. The fund is designed to encourage partnerships between government, iwi/hapū, the community, philanthropic, and private sectors. Where appropriate, the Ministry will facilitate connections between those seeking further funding and those who may be able to assist, as well as any funding from the FIF.

We also encourage you to provide partnership letters of support as attachments to your Expression of Interest.

Eligibility criteria

The Minister for the Environment has set criteria for the Freshwater Improvement Fund. Projects must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible to apply. The expression of interest form contains a self-assessment checklist which must be completed as part of the expression of interest process.

Eligibility criteria	
1	The project must contribute to the improvement of the management of New Zealand freshwater bodies.
2	<p>The project must address one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• achieve demonstrable co-benefits such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– improved fresh, estuarine or marine water quality or quantity– increased biodiversity– habitat protection– soil conservation– improved community outcomes such as recreational opportunity or mahinga kai– reduction to current or future impacts of climate change– reduced pressure on urban or rural infrastructure• increase iwi/hapū, community, local government, or industry capability and capacity in relation to freshwater management• establish or enhance collaborative management of fresh water• increase the application of mātauranga Māori in freshwater management• include an applied research component which contributes to improved understanding of freshwater interventions and their outcomes.
3	The minimum request for funding is \$200,000 (excluding GST).
4	The project will be funded for a maximum period of up to five years, after which the project objectives will have been achieved or the project will be self-funding.
5	The project will achieve benefits that would not otherwise be realised without the fund or are not more appropriately funded through other sources.
6	The effectiveness of the project and its outcomes will be monitored, evaluated and reported.

Eligibility criteria	
7	An appropriate governance structure is in place (or will be established as part of the project).
8	The applicant is a legal entity.

If your project does not meet all the eligibility criteria, you may not apply for funding from the Freshwater Improvement Fund. However, there may be other government funding options available to you. For a list of other funding options see <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/funding/sources-funding/funding-other-government-departments>.

Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest to the fund are measured against assessment criteria. The assessment panel reviews, scores and assesses expressions of interest that meet the eligibility criteria by determining the extent to which and how well the project meets the assessment criteria.

Assessment criteria	
1	The extent to which the project addresses the management of freshwater bodies identified as vulnerable by community, iwi/hapū, local or central government.
2	The project demonstrates improvement in the values and benefits derived from the freshwater body.
3	The project contributes to recovery from COVID-19 through such things as, but not limited to, generating new employment and maintaining existing workforce capacity.
4	The extent to which public benefit is increased.
5	The project demonstrates a high likelihood of success based on sound technical information or examples of success achieved through comparable projects undertaken elsewhere.
6	The extent to which the project will leverage other funding.
7	Where applicants request more than 50% of the project costs, the extent to which the higher funding contribution is justified by the COVID-19 recovery outcomes likely to be achieved.
8	The project will involve the necessary partner organisations to ensure its success.
9	The project will engage personnel with the required skills and experience to successfully deliver the project.

The greatest emphasis will be placed on criteria 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8.

What costs does FIF funding cover?

The Freshwater Improvement Fund will pay for reasonable costs for:

- personnel
- administration
- consultants and contractors
- venue and equipment
- travel and accommodation (but only domestic) in line with the expense policy in the deed
- promotion and dissemination of information

- financial, legal and IT services
- health and safety equipment and training
- purchase of capital assets and other capital costs
- other miscellaneous costs.

Use the table below to help you estimate your costs.

Cost category	Includes...	Example
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wages/salaries of all the people directly involved in the project • Staff recruitment and training 	You need to employ a part-time coordinator to work 20 hours per week, at a rate of \$25 per hour over 12 months. The estimated cost would be \$26,000.
Administration	<p>Administration expenses directly related to the project</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the cheapest option for making phone calls • Personal calls are not covered • Phone calls charged to hotel bills are often extremely expensive: avoid where possible 	Cost of stationery, insurance, postage, phone calls and couriers.
Consultants and contractors	<p>Third parties you have sub-contracted (eg, environmental consultancies, Crown research institutes)</p> <p>Note: sub-contractors may need to be approved by the Ministry before being engaged</p>	A consultant may quote \$129 per hour (exclusive of GST) for working 10 hours per week for 10 weeks. The estimated cost would be \$12,900.
Venue and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue hire • Rent • Rental and leasing of equipment for the project 	You may need to hire or lease a vehicle or trailer, or pay rent on an office space.
Travel and accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mileage (claimed at the standard mileage rate for motor vehicles stated on the 'Mileage rate for self-employed people and reimbursing employees' page on the Inland Revenue website, currently 72 cents/km for a private vehicle) • Taxis/parking (may be claimed on receipt) • Domestic air travel • Hotel accommodation (up to \$160 per night for accommodation in New Zealand, exclusive of GST) • Meals (actual and reasonable expenses on receipt, for meals and other incidental expenses while on out-of-town business) <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry encourages the purchase of the cheapest fares unless there are valid reasons not to • International air travel is not covered by funding • Where available, use alternatives to travel (eg, video conferencing, teleconferencing) • Mini bar charges are a personal expense and cannot be charged back to the Ministry as part of the accommodation bill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four flights from Wellington to Auckland at \$500 return (exclusive of GST). The estimated cost would be \$2000. • A return road trip from Auckland to Hamilton, at a total distance of 252km with mileage at 72 cents per kilometre. The estimated cost would be \$181.44.

Cost category	Includes...	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol purchases are a personal expense and cannot be charged back to the Ministry as part of travel expenses Where mileage is via a private vehicle, the traveller is responsible for insurance. The Ministry will not be liable for any costs incurred in an accident in these circumstances 	
Promotion and dissemination of information	Expenses for promoting the project (eg, brochures, advertising costs, hui, workshops)	You may need to publish a brochure. To estimate the cost, you need to research the costs of designing, printing and distributing.
Financial, legal and IT expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial or legal expenses Accounting services IT support 	You may need to engage a lawyer or an accountant.
Health and safety equipment and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment Health and safety training First aid kits 	An effective health and safety plan may require additional equipment and training.
Purchase of capital assets and other capital costs	Essential capital expenditure, including the cost of bringing the new asset to working order, or any associated labour and lease expenses	The purchase and installation of infrastructure. Includes the costs of bringing the asset to working order.
Other miscellaneous costs	Anything else not covered above (eg, plants, fencing, field equipment). This must be solely related to the project	

What the FIF fund does not cover

The following categories of expenditure are not eligible for funding from the Freshwater Improvement Fund:

Category	Not covered
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that are purely for research. Academic costs or research to support a qualification. Duplication of demonstration projects.
Other funding sources, including government agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that would be more appropriately funded by other sources. Projects that are clearly the responsibility of other funding sources (eg, government agencies). This includes outputs specifically to develop central government policy. Statutory duties of local government (activities that councils are required to undertake by law, for example, local government planning, resource consent approval, or monitoring functions).
Retrospective costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrospective or backdated costs (incurred before both parties sign a deed of funding).
Projects for financial profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venture capital or commercial development such as setting up (new) or developing (existing) business activities, marketing a new idea, or making a financial profit.
Business as usual operating costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs relating to an organisation's normal activities. This includes but is not limited to:

Category	Not covered
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - buying materials and equipment that are a normal part of managing property and day-to-day business - the maintenance and running costs of vehicles (including warrant of fitness and registration) - the purchase and/or maintenance of buildings.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at conferences. • Patents or copyright (products or outputs that will not be freely available for public use, nor for non-profit purposes). • Compliance with planning regulations and other legal compliance costs. • Making/challenging a resource or building consent expression of interest. • Alcohol, entertainment, gifts or social expenses. • Costs associated with supporting a political party or movement, running a political campaign, or lobbying against the Government.

The funding process

Funding from the Freshwater Improvement Fund is contestable.

Funding is made in rounds or stages – see key dates.

A successful expression of interest will follow these three stages:

STAGE 1: Expression of interest and decision

Step 1	Check if your project proposal meets the eligibility criteria. Projects that do not meet all of these criteria will be declined.
Step 2	If eligible, complete your expression of interest. You must complete all sections of the expression of interest form in full.
Step 3	Send your expression of interest form to fifapplication@mfe.govt.nz . Expressions of interest must be received electronically no later than: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mid-day Wednesday 10 February 2021.
Step 4	A panel assesses all eligible expressions of interest against the assessment criteria, and on their merit compared to other expressions of interest. Panel members' skills and experience will include knowledge of the Freshwater National Policy Statement and implementation requirements, freshwater ecosystems, mātauranga Māori and economics.
Step 5	If the panel selects your expression of interest you will then be asked to fill out a full application.
Step 6	A panel assess all applications against the assessment criteria and on their merit compared to other applications.
Step 7	The panel makes funding recommendations to the Sustainable Land Use Ministers, who make the final decision on the allocation of the fund. The panel may recommend granting less funding than requested.
Step 9	All applicants are notified of the funding decision. Successful applicants are invited to proceed to stage 2.

STAGE 2: Develop project plan and sign deed of funding

Step 9	<p>Successful applicants work with the Ministry to refine and confirm their project details, and agree to the terms and conditions of the deed of funding. The deed of funding sets out the obligations and the rights of each party including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• objectives, activities and performance measures• detailed project budget and payment schedule• intellectual property and liability• any project-specific funding conditions. <p>The Ministry will undertake independent third party due diligence and reference checks on projects during project planning and before the deed of funding is signed. The Ministry may also verify information in the expression of interest form with other government agencies or other organisations.</p>
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STAGE 3: Project start

Step 10	<p>Once the Ministry and the successful applicant have signed a deed of funding, the project can begin. Applicants begin work on their projects and report on milestones as these are met. Funding for the costs of delivering the project is not available for any activities done before both parties have signed the deed of funding.</p> <p>The Ministry will monitor and assess each project against the agreed performance measures and conditions in the deed. Reimbursement payments will be made in accordance with the payments schedule in the deed.</p>
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Key dates

The table lists the key dates for the 2021 funding round. The dates are indicative and may change. Any change will be notified through the Freshwater Improvement Fund pages on the Ministry for the Environment website.

FIF 2021 round	
27 January 2021	Funding round opens for expressions of interest
10 February 2021 (mid-day)	Funding round closes
10 February to March 2021	Assessment panel considers expressions of interest
Mid-April 2021	Applicants are notified of decisions regarding expression of interest. Those who have been invited to apply will be sent application forms
Mid-June 2021	Applications are due
June to July 2021	Assessment panel considers applications
Mid-August 2021	Applicants are notified of decisions regarding applications
August to November 2021	Successful applicants finalise project plans and sign deed of funding agreements
December 2021 onwards	Projects begin

Applying for funding

Before you apply, you should have an understanding of how your expression of interest will be assessed (see assessment criteria). If you have any questions, please email us at fif@mfe.govt.nz.

Please note that the Ministry cannot give specific guidance on the content of your expression of interest, but can help with:

- advising on information to include in the expression of interest form
- confirming the process for assessing expressions of interest
- providing information on key dates for the fund.

Tips

- If you seek advice from the Ministry on your draft expression of interest form, please be sure to do this well in advance of the closing date to ensure we have the capacity to respond.
- Plan ahead by putting the closing date for submitting expressions of interest in your diary, and allow plenty of time to prepare the expression of interest. Take any holiday periods into account.
- For the best chance of success, your expression of interest should strongly align with the fund's assessment criteria, and be clearly and concisely written.
- Successful applicants will be required to report details of the employment they plan to and have created. This is a significant departure from historic reporting requirements, and you may want to consider the administration impact this will have on your project, when determining project costs.
- Write in plain English, and avoid jargon, clichés and overused phrases. Write so your reader will understand what you want them to know.
- Consider other expressions of interest you may have submitted to other funds in the past. If you were successful, what made it a good expression of interest? If you were unsuccessful, consider the feedback you received.
- Answer all the questions. If you are not sure about a question, refer back to this guide. If you are still uncertain, email us at fif@mfe.govt.nz.
- Ask a colleague or a third party to review and proofread your expression of interest.

Important: Answers to some of the questions in the expression of interest form have a word limit. The form will not allow you to exceed this limit.

Completing the expression of interest form

SECTION A: Applicant details

This section provides information about your organisation, including legal name, legal entity status and contact details.

Organisation name

Provide the full legal name of the organisation that is applying for funding. For example, for a registered company this would be the name listed on the [Companies Office website](#).

If your project is run by multiple organisations, please only enter the organisation name of who the Ministry would enter into a funding deed with and will manage the delivery of the project.

Legal entity status

To receive funding from the FIF, applicants must be a legal entity with capacity to enter into a legally enforceable agreement with the Ministry. Legal entities include incorporated societies, charitable trusts, companies, limited partnerships and Māori trust boards.

Use the drop down options to select your status, or use the text box to specify.

Type of entity	Proof of legal status
Incorporated society	Certificate of Registration with the Companies Office under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908
Charitable trust	Certificate of Registration with the Companies Office under the Charitable Trusts Act 1957
Limited partnership	Certificate of Registration with the Companies Office under the Limited Partnerships Act 2008
Māori trust board	Declared by any enactment to be a Māori trust board within the meaning of the Māori Trust Boards Act 1955
Limited liability company	Certificate of Registration with the Companies Office under the Companies Act 1993
Co-operative company	Certificate of Registration with the Companies Office under the Co-operative Companies Act 1996
Other (eg, individual person)	Copy of driver's licence or passport
Incorporated society	Certificate of Registration with the Companies Office under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908

New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)

NZBN is a globally unique identifier, available to every Kiwi business, whether you're self-employed or a major corporation. This helps us easily, quickly and digitally access all the details they need about your business in order to work with you.

Please enter your New Zealand Business Number (NZBN), or Trust, Charity, Incorporated Society registration number.

GST number

Government funding is a taxable activity. If you are conducting a taxable activity and your annual income exceeds \$60,000, your organisation MUST be registered for GST. If you are not registered, you will bear the full cost of GST on goods and services you purchase for the project.

For more information, see www.ird.govt.nz/gst or phone the Inland Revenue Department on 0800 377 776.

Primary contact

State the name, organisation, phone number and email address for the person we will primarily communicate with throughout this application process.

SECTION B: Project details

This section provides summary information about the project name, description, location, number of years and amount of funding sought.

Project name

This should be short and concise.

Purpose

Describe in 1,000 characters or less the problem your project aims to address, the solution you propose, and the long-term outcomes this will achieve. This should be a short overview of your project. You will be able to expand on this later in the expression of interest.

Region

Confirm the region where the project is located. If the project spans more than one region, select all that apply. A tick should appear in the boxes you select.

Details of water body(s)

The fund will only support projects which improve the management of freshwater. Describe in 500 characters or less the name of the freshwater body and its GPS location. If your project includes more than one water body, give details of all the waterbodies you aim to address, and their locations.

Using google maps, search for the water body your project will address. Hold the mouse on the project location, then double click. This will bring up your latitude/longitude coordinates. Provide the latitude and longitude in decimal format (eg, -41.277770, 174.778907). If your project has multiple sites, choose the most significant or relevant site.

What issues does this water body face?

Describe in 1000 characters or less the issues the water body faces. Although the fund gives priority to projects in catchments considered to be vulnerable by community, iwi/hapū, local or central government, expressions of interest for other catchments are still eligible to apply for funding.

You may provide your own information about the state of the catchment, or you may draw from other sources.

Other information to support an assessment of a catchment’s vulnerability includes:

- scientific data and analysis (a summary analysis is sufficient; please do not include large amounts of raw data)
- case studies from your project location
- water quantities or flow regimes
- water quality trends
- cultural health indicators
- recreational significance (eg, fishing, kayaking or swimming)
- any other information you consider relevant.

When referencing supporting information or data, we recommend:

- you use the most recent available data
- any scientific research is directly related to the issues your project addresses
- data is from reputable sources such as government agencies, councils, non-government organisations or academic or peer-reviewed journals.

Resource	Website	What it provides
Regional council and territorial authority websites	Various – see list of councils and links to websites on the Department of Internal Affairs website	District and regional councils are required to monitor and assess the state of the environment. Monitoring data such as water quality, river flow and groundwater levels may be available from council websites.
Land Air Water Aotearoa (LAWA)	www.lawa.org.nz	LAWA displays water quality data collected by regional councils at over 1100 sites across New Zealand.
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)	www.niwa.co.nz	NIWA is a Crown research institute that provides public information on rivers, lakes, and groundwater conditions across New Zealand, including water quantity and quality.
MfE Data Service	www.mfe.govt.nz/more/data/mfe-data-service	Environmental datasets published by the Ministry for the Environment. It includes water quality data for rivers, lakes and groundwater.
The Environmental Research Institute (ERI)	www.waikato.ac.nz/eri/	ERI (part of the University of Waikato) researches environmental issues across a range of ecosystems, including freshwater.
LERNZ Freshwater Database – LERNZdb	http://lernzdb.its.waikato.ac.nz/	Database of water quality and biological data measured in lakes, rivers and wetlands in New Zealand. Part of the Lake Ecosystem Restoration New Zealand (LERNZ) Project.

Resource	Website	What it provides
Local iwi/hapū	Various	Iwi/hapū may have cultural monitoring data or information on local values and/or perspectives of freshwater ecosystems.
Local environmental and recreational NGOs	Various	Many NGOs involved in freshwater may provide local or regional information or data.

You may want to describe any activities that have contributed, or are contributing to, a decline in freshwater quality or quantity. Examples include legacy contamination, urban or intensive land use, industrial processes, diffuse/non-point sources of pollution (including sedimentation, animal effluent, fertiliser run-off, stormwater run-off or consented discharges) or water abstraction. You may also want to consider more long-term impacts, such as climate change.

Indicate whether the activities are ongoing. Consider the wider connection of the water body to the rest of the catchment. There will be little advantage in a restoration if there is a continuing upstream (or downstream) barrier to recovery.

Consider:

- whether a demonstrated need, problem or opportunity exists
- the size or extent of the opportunity or problem
- likely consequences of not addressing the problem now
- the impact of the problem on the environment or people's lives
- why the water body is important to local Māori
- community and stakeholder observations, feelings, experiences and effects.

How will your project address these issues?

Describe in 1000 characters or less how your project will address the problem, and contribute to improving the management of a freshwater body.

Consider:

- the specific, practical action to address the problem
- highlighting how this projects aligns with a freshwater strategy / action plan developed by iwi/hapū, the wider community, or local government
- the feasibility of the proposed solution
- the expected improvements to freshwater quality or quantity
- how the activities will contribute to community values and aspirations for freshwater.

Where applicable, highlight the outputs this project will produce related to Jobs for Nature

Guidance on Jobs for Nature Indicators			
Focus area	Metric	Application of definition	Comment
Fresh water restoration	Number of plants planted in riparian, lake, or wetlands areas	Intends to cover planting within 30m from edge of water body.	The distinction between “riparian” planting and “afforestation or other planting” at 30m reflects the fact that, in general, plantings within 30m will have most effect on aquatic restoration whereas benefits of planting wider than 30m is primarily for terrestrial biodiversity.
	Area (ha) of riparian, lake, or wetlands planting completed	As above – plantings within ~30m from edge of waterbodies.	Note that these funded works can be reported here and also as part of the “area of works covered by FEP completed indicator” if appropriate.
	Length (km) of new fencing constructed and maintenance of existing fencing	Agglomerated and irrespective of fencing type, whether fencing is for pest control, stock access to waterways, etc.	Note that, per the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, new fences excluding stock from rivers, lakes and wetlands should be erected at least 3m setback. For more information: https://www.mfe.govt.nz/fresh-water/freshwater-acts-and-regulations/stock-exclusion-regulations
On farm and other restoration activities	Number of Farm Environment Plans created	Raw count	
Pest control and fish passage	Total area (ha) of animal pest control completed	Area of animal pest control irrespective of the number of times pest control activities are undertaken.	Note that these funded works can be reported here and also as part of the “area of works covered by FEP completed indicator” if appropriate.
	Total area (ha) of plant pest control completed	Area of plant pest control irrespective of the number of times pest control activities are undertaken.	Note that these funded works can be reported here and also as part of the “area of works covered by FEP completed indicator” if appropriate.
	Number of fish passage barriers remediated (removed or managed)	Raw count	

There is also space in the EOI to provide additional outputs of this project not related to the specified Jobs for Nature Indicators.

Who/what organisations do you intend to partner with or work with?

Provide a list of partners and their specific roles for the project, in 100 characters or less. Where appropriate, indicate who you expect to receive co-funding from by ticking the Yes box.

It is highly recommended that support letters from these partners are attached in your submission email alongside your expression of interest form, to provide the Assessment Panel evidence of these partnerships and co-funding agreements.

How will you engage with iwi/hapū and other partners throughout the project?

Describe in 500 characters or less how you will engage with iwi/hapū and other organisations and interested parties throughout the life of the project.

How does the project contribute to recovery from COVID-19?

Describe in 500 characters or less how the project contributes to recovery from COVID-19. The government has made Freshwater Improvement Funding available through Jobs for Nature as part of its response to COVID-19. The Government has a particular focus on employment and job creation, alongside its focus on improving environmental outcomes and sustainable higher value production in the land-based sectors.

Jobs for Nature has three core objectives:

- creating jobs at pace with regional spread
- creating lasting benefits for freshwater ecosystems and water quality, biodiversity, climate change and cultural values
- supporting sustainable land use and the implementation of new regulatory requirements, including for freshwater, biodiversity and climate change.

Explain how your project will help to contribute to recovery from COVID-19, including the expected number of new jobs. Consider things such as, but not limited to, generating new employment and maintaining existing workforce capacity. You can outline the local employment and economic context. Consider whether your project will:

- employ people in sectors immediately affected by Covid-19
- provide opportunities for skills development
- create contracting opportunities for local organisations facing a longer-term downturn.

Preference will be given to projects that deliver the most favourable level of job creation for each dollar of Crown money invested. Ideally, projects should produce one full-time-equivalent (FTE) per \$100,000 of crown investment, and summed by year. For example, a riparian planting crew of two people working six months per year for five years equates to 5 FTE (0.5 FTE * 2 people * 5 years). Stats NZ defines full-time employment as 30 hours or more per week.

Nature-based employment outcomes?

The project should be for a minimum of one year or up to a maximum of five years (ending 30 June 2026).

By entering the number of FTE (full-time equivalent) in each year, you will also be indicating how many years you expect the project to run for.

For example, if there is 5 FTE in Year 1, 10 FTE in Year 2 and 0 in Year 3-5, that would indicate that this project would run for 2 years.

An FTE is considered employment of 30 hours per week.

All people paid for the delivery of a project should be counted, including:

- People employed by the fund recipient for project activities, such as regional council staff;
- People who deliver project-related services and are contracted by the fund recipient; or
- work for firms that are employed, contracted, sub-contracted, or reimbursed by the fund recipient. This includes, for example, fencing contractors and training providers.

Projects should **not** report people paid connected to delivery of goods paid for through the project, such as plant nursery staff who grow the seedlings purchased through the funded project. Central government agencies intend to evaluate and report on this type of information, and there is a risk of double-counting if projects also report this data.

In short, projects should report people paid for project management, administration and support, and other delivery of services, but projects should not report people paid indirectly through delivery of goods.

Project funding

This is the total estimated cash cost to deliver your project in full, including funding from the FIF, external funding and your organisation's contribution.

The Freshwater Improvement Fund contribution is the total amount of funding that you are requesting from MfE. There is no maximum amount that you can request. However, the assessment criteria favour proposals requesting FIF contributions less than 50% of the project's total cost. For reference, projects awarded recently averaged \$2.5 million in crown funding, and had an average crown co-funding amount of 68%.

In-kind contributions are goods or services provided other than money, such as voluntary labour or donated services.

Cash contribution refers to the funding that your organisation will contribute to the project either directly or through other sources of income.

The values provided must:

- be at least NZ\$200,000
- exclude GST
- add up to the total project cost.

SECTION C: Declaration

A person with the organisation's signing authority must complete the declaration (eg, the chief executive officer or equivalent delegated authority). This person may be different from the primary contact person for the expression of interest.

Provide the name, position, and signature of the person with the organisation's signing authority and include the date the declaration is signed.

Important: By electronically signing the declaration in the expression of interest you are agreeing to the contents of the declaration.

When your expression of interest is complete

Deadlines

Completed expression of interest forms (including all supporting information) must be received by the Ministry for the Environment by mid-day 10 February 2021.

Completeness

Ensure your expression of interest is complete. The checklist at the end of the expression of interest form helps you confirm that you have included all the required information.

You **must** ensure:

- you have completed all sections of the expression of interest form
- you have electronically signed and dated the declaration
- all dollar figures add up to the total project costs
- answers remain under any word limits.

If your expression of interest is incomplete, or you have altered or edited the form templates in any way, your expression of interest will not be considered for funding.

Submitting the expression of interest

Email your completed expression of interest form and supporting documentation (as required) to fifapplication@mfe.govt.nz (with 'FIF expression of interest' and your organisation name in the subject line).

Along with your expression of interest, we encourage you to submit letters of support from any organisations that you will partner with during your proposed project.

You may also include a 1-2 page cover letter with your expression of interest that includes additional information you would like to tell us about your project or partnerships (not required).

We will not consider an expression of interest if it is received after the closing date or closing time.

After you have emailed your expression of interest, you should receive confirmation that it has been received. If you have not received a reply within one working day please call to let us know. Emails can be blocked without notification (though rarely) to either party and we do not want to miss your expression of interest.

Important: You must submit your expression of interest by email to fifapplication@mfe.govt.nz.
The email subject line must contain the word 'expression of interest' and your organisation's name (for example, 'Freshwater Improvement Fund Expression of interest – 123 Company'). We do not accept physically posted expressions of interest.

Appendix 1: Online resources

The following resources can help you plan your project, and provide further support.

Resource	Website address	What it provides
Ministry for the Environment	www.mfe.govt.nz/more/funding/sources-funding	List of funding sources from the Ministry and other government agencies
Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)	www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-and-programmes/	List of funding programmes available from MPI
Department of Conservation (DOC)	www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/	List of funding programmes available from DOC
Provincial Development Unit (PDU)	https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/economic-development/regional-economic-development/provincial-development-unit/	Information on the Provincial Growth Fund
Community Net Aotearoa	www.community.net.nz	Resources for setting up and running community organisations and projects, including a 'How to Funding Guide'
Funding Opportunities for Communities	http://generosity.org.nz/giv-us	Funding information for voluntary organisations, iwi and community groups
Wai Māori	https://waimaori.maori.nz/	Helps to advance Māori interests in freshwater fisheries
Fundraising Institute of New Zealand	http://www.finz.org.nz/	Dedicated to promoting philanthropy and excellence in ethical fundraising
Health and Safety at Work Act 2015	www.worksafe.govt.nz/worksafe/hswa	Information on the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015