

1 April 2022

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RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

Thank you for your email on 5 March 2022 to the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting the following information regarding the Community COVID-19 Fund (the Fund) under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- *A full list of successful applicants, including the amount awarded.*
- *How much altogether was the fund valued in the end?*
- *A full list of applicants for the fund, including the amount they applied for and purpose.*

In 2020, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) offered Pacific communities and groups the opportunity to apply for the Fund, the purpose of which was to support groups to lead and deliver initiatives to help Pacific peoples respond to and recover from the impact of COVID-19. Applications opened on 27 July and closed on 28 August 2020.

Community groups could apply for multiple separate initiatives. Submissions received ranged from \$2,000 to \$50,000, and aligned with one of the three funding categories:

- **Grassroots initiatives (grants up to \$5,000):** Funding for groups that have a new idea that they want to test and pilot.
- **Acceleration initiatives (grants up to \$10,000):** Funding for an initiative that has already had a positive impact in the community, and you would like to improve it.
- **Lift off initiatives (grants up to \$50,000):** Funding for an initiative that has already had a positive impact in the community, and you would like to collaborate with others to scale up or expand to deliver in other regions.

How much altogether was the fund valued in the end?

The Ministry was allocated \$2.95m from Budget 2020. The total amount of the Fund allocated to successful applicants was \$2,944,914.67.

A full list of successful applicants, including the amount awarded.

The list of successful applicants is publicly available on our website [here](#). The specific amounts awarded to each successful applicant will be made publicly available on our website soon. This part of your request is refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

A full list of applicants for the fund, including the amount they applied for and purpose.

The Ministry received 558 applications, totalling \$8.9 million. Of these, 14 applications were submitted late and were not considered. The Ministry progressed 544 eligible applications to a funding panel who reviewed and assessed the applications following a criteria and rating system. This approach was to ensure applications were fairly assessed.

The evaluation criteria included the following questions:

- Is the purpose of the initiative clear?
- Does the purpose align to the Ministry's Lalanga Fou goals and to the response or recovery of Pacific communities from COVID-19?
- Does the budget meet the delivery of the initiatives?
- Are the timelines achievable?

The Ministry did not fund initiatives if there were other appropriate avenues for funding. Applications that were declined were referred on to other government agencies providing funding, including the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Internal Affairs.

Of the 264 successful applicants, 75% of applicants were awarded the amount they applied for. The number of successful applicants in alignment to the three categories of funding are shown in the table below.

Number of successful applicants' for each category of funding

Category of funding	No. of applications
Grassroots initiatives (grants up to \$5,000)	106
Acceleration initiatives (grants up to \$10,000)	120
Lift off initiatives (grants up to \$50,000)	38
TOTAL	264

As noted earlier, the list of successful applicants can be found on our website [here](#). The request for the list of unsuccessful applicants is withheld under section 9(2)(ba) of the OIA to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence. We are also withholding the amounts applied for and purposes applied for, for all applicants under section 9(2)(ba) of the OIA.

The Ministry considers that it is in the public interest to keep these details confidential to maintain relationships with our community groups and to ensure groups are not discouraged from applying for other funding in future. We do not consider there are any other public interest considerations that render it desirable to make this information available.

While we cannot provide you with specific information about individual applications, we can provide a summary outlining the overarching themes and purposes of the applications. A copy of this summary is appended to this letter. I trust that this summary will provide you with useful information about the purposes of the applications received, while also maintaining the confidentiality of these groups regarding the information they provided to the Ministry in their applications.

In line with standard OIA practice, the Ministry proactively publishes its responses to OIA requests. As such, this letter will be published on the Ministry for Pacific Peoples' website. Your personal details will be removed, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you or your company.

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at: uia_requests@mpp.govt.nz.

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

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Tuaepepe Abba Fidow
Deputy Secretary,
Regional Partnerships

Appendix: The overarching themes and purposes applied for, for the Community COVID-19 Fund

The four overarching themes of the applications were:

- **Digital Connectivity:** Building digital capability, digital access packs, and upgrading digital functions e.g., live streaming and websites.
- **Physical health and mental wellbeing:** Building confidence through physical activity, nutrition workshops, mentoring programmes, gardening/harvest programmes, mental wellbeing workshops and support, sewing and home good initiatives, initiatives that support reconnection in the community, Pacific language and cultural workshops.
- **Social support:** Pre-employment workshops and training, engagements on impact of COVID-19 and support, community hub for wraparound support, dissemination of key support information and community needs assessments.
- **Initiatives and services that support equity groups:** Groups include youth, disability and women.

The key themes, specific examples, and nature of requests are outlined in the table below.

Key themes	Examples and nature of requests
Digital development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital platform, website, and app development • Strengthening digital communications across communities • Digital platform development • Software support for Pacific businesses online • Digital connectivity enhancement to support online learning • Production and publication of online media • Digital devices for connectivity • Growth of digital community capabilities • Digital upgrades for live streaming • Digital and virtual connectivity • Social media online presence through innovative designs • Digital access pack • Digital enhancement for Pacific elderly • Supporting capability of Pacific elders with technology • Computer based training modules • Digital capability and connectivity for virtual engagement with youth and Sunday school groups • Upgrade church digital capability for engagement workshops
Physical health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational fitness and nutrition information/support for communities • Developing confident young people through physical activity • Promotion of healthy lifestyles • Empowering communities
Disabled persons community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness programme that caters to disabled persons • Accessibility of networks and support for Pacific disabled persons while developing resilience
COVID-19 response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on COVID-19 • Engagements on impact of COVID-19 and support

Key themes	Examples and nature of requests
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity support for communities during COVID-19 • COVID-19 information in Pacific languages for communities of all ages to be well informed
Pacific enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of Pacific communities in business • Culturally specific online resources for Pacific business owners • Educational support for digital systems to support Pacific women in commerce
Dissemination of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform for ongoing communications to communities regarding education, employment, and social services • Social media COVID-19 communications targeted at youth
Employment pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment programme • Youth leadership and training
Pacific languages revitalisation/culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of cultural arts • Pacific arts and crafts for Pacific women • Community cultural workshops • Engagement and connectivity through indigenous storytelling
Mental health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring programmes • Wellness for women • Conference/fono to reconnect communities • Gardening projects • Health wellbeing initiative • Mentoring, educational and wellness support during COVID-19
Hub development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community hub for social support e.g., food, services, and information
Communication outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of government and social messaging on radio to reach ethnic-specific groups • Newsletter for dissemination of information
Support for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural identity, arts, and language support for Pacific women • Creativity outlet for Pacific women for experiences around COVID-19
Upskilling of Pacific communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing skills that will support Pacific communities to become prosperous • Home skills e.g., crafts, sewing and garments • Educational workshops on upskilling in Pacific crafts and cultural traditions • Educational and training initiatives
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangible resources to assist in implementing mobilisation of initiative(s) beneficial to Pacific people • Digital devices for connectivity at home to strengthen engagement through workshops for community
Pacific youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth led initiatives to engage young people and strengthen their confidence in response to COVID-19 • Engagement with young people for opportunities in sports and recreation

Key themes	Examples and nature of requests
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational programme for young people • Health and wellbeing talanoa for youth • Network groups for tertiary students in creative studies • Upgrade of musical instruments to support Church youth groups • Online capacity to provide cultural, academic and gospel classes for children • Online courses to influence key Pacific youth into growing leadership capability • Youth development and online connectivity • Youth development through sports
Community 'needs assessments'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitally based 'needs assessments' for young people • Needs assessments for health and wellbeing • Feasibility study to assess needs for Pacific families across different areas