



SFF Futures

Application guidance

Your snapshot view to find out what you need to know first

SFF Futures is looking to invest in innovative initiatives at every level, from small grassroots community, hapū or whānau projects to large-scale industry development in the food and fibre sectors.

Your idea might be a new product or service, or a better way of doing something; it could create new jobs or increase skills. It can't be "business as usual".

You'll need to be able to tell MPI what your project aims to deliver with SFF Futures investment that you couldn't otherwise do, and what difference your project will make to New Zealand and to New Zealanders. And of course there are no funding rounds so you can share your idea with us at any time.

Here are some questions to consider:

- Will your project make a positive difference to our food and fibre sectors, or the people and whānau who work in them, or the environment?
- How will you be able to show the difference your project will make?
- Why do you need government funding for your project?
- What will New Zealanders get in return for this government funding?
- How much money do you think you will need?
- How much of the project cost will you be able to cover yourself?
- How will funding be spent and over what time frame?
- Are contingencies planned for and if so, how?

FUNDING TYPES

Creating opportunities for many organisations

FUNDING TYPES – key differences, not rigid parameters

Four types of funding: Partnerships, Small Partnerships, Grants and Small Grants.

Partnerships: long-term, large-scale and multi-faceted programmes involving multiple co-investors.

Grants: generally more appropriate for smaller-scale initiatives with a greater community-group focus.

FUNDING TYPE	PROGRAMME COST	CONTRACT LENGTH (YEARS)	EXPECTED TIME FROM APPLICATION TO CONTRACT
Partnerships	Over \$5 million	5 or more	12 months
Small Partnerships	\$2 million to \$5 million	3 to 5	12 months
Grants	Less than \$2 million	Up to 3	6 months
Small Grants	Up to \$100,000	Up to 1	3 months

IS YOUR IDEA ELIGIBLE?

Let's find out here

1. Scope

Your project must relate to one or more of these sectors: agriculture, fisheries, forestry or associated sectors e.g. pastoral, arable, horticulture, viticulture, apiculture, seafood, wild fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, wood, food and beverage, dietary supplements, nutraceuticals, agritech.

2. Sustainable benefits to New Zealand

Your project must benefit New Zealand and/or New Zealanders, not just your business or organisation. What impact will your successful project make to New Zealand?

3. Beyond business as usual

Tell us how your idea is additional to business as usual, both for your organisation and your wider industry, sector or community.

CO-INVESTMENT

We want to be working with you

CO-INVESTMENT

Key point: the applicant must contribute to the cost of the project.

Key point: the extent of sustainable benefits to New Zealand – that is, the “public good” – will determine the extent of MPI’s investment.

- A maximum of 40 percent of the total cost will be contributed by MPI for commercially-orientated programmes.
- Up to 80 percent of the total cost will be contributed by MPI to community projects.

Key point: your co-investment cannot be made up of funds received from other Crown funding. Some exceptions may be applied for those community-driven proposals that have local and regional government co-funding.

Key point: your co-investment is expected to be in cash. Some exceptions may be applied at MPI’s discretion for applicants that do not have adequate cash resources, but who could supply things like labour and equipment as “in kind” contributions instead of cash.

What’s eligible: project work that builds on prior knowledge, extends it into a new level, significantly scales up an existing product or service.

Ineligible: duplication of existing work, business as usual activities.

4. Co-investment

Your organisation must commit to co-funding, preferably in cash. In-kind contributions are considered for community-led projects where cash resources may be limited.

5. Consistency with international obligations and trade policies

SFF Futures funding must be consistent with New Zealand’s international obligations and trade policies.

We will work with you to clarify that your idea aligns with current international agreements.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

What your proposal will be assessed against

SUSTAINABLE BENEFITS TO NEW ZEALAND

What benefit/impact will your project deliver if successful?

Economic/financial: Financial benefits might be cost savings, and/or increased revenue. They may be shared by everyone involved in the project or even go wider.

Environmental: The impact on the natural environment – land, soil, water, plants and animals.

Social and Cultural: These benefits include people's skills, knowledge, physical and mental health, cultural identity and the connections between people and communities/hapori.

INNOVATION

Can your proposal demonstrate one of the following:

- a novel/innovative approach;
- the ability to deliver significant advancements on what already exists;
- an awareness of, or ability to leverage emerging technologies, market or environmental trends, new business or operating models;
- linkages to other research/work, not “reinventing the wheel”;
- what the potential innovation is.

BEYOND BUSINESS as USUAL

Does your proposal demonstrate:

- how the proposed work is additional to work already underway by your organisation or sector/community;
- why government funding is necessary – what is the critical element that won't happen if there is no government investment.

FIT WITH RELEVANT STRATEGIES

Can your proposal demonstrate:

- knowledge of any sector (or government) strategy and how your proposal may fit, or not;
- where it does fit, how will it benefit the sector;
- that if the project is disruptive, why, and how will it disrupt a known strategy.

PATH TO MARKET/ADOPTION and EXTENSION

Path to Market – Can your proposal for new products, technology or services demonstrate the following:

- a clear understanding of customer needs;
- the scale of the opportunity;
- how to meet market requirements and is there an accessible market;
- a clear understanding of path to market and appropriate strategy;
- key dependencies;

- supply agreements/contracts;
- competitor analysis;
- risks and issue management;
- contingency planning.

Adoption and extension – if it's a “practice change” type proposal does it demonstrate:

- appropriate networks to disseminate project outputs through;
- adequate consideration towards collaboration and information-sharing, including sharing intellectual property;
- the project team's capability to develop, then implement a robust extension strategy;
- the extension strategy is based on clear understanding of producers/stakeholders' appetite for adoption;
- how best to engage with producers/stakeholders to achieve significant adoption;
- the ability to measure the extent of adoption and practice change.

ABILITY TO DELIVER

Does your proposal demonstrate that:

- the project team has, or will acquire, the required resources (including any permits), capabilities and skills to deliver on time, on budget, and to report progress to MPI;
- technical skills will be outsourced if you don't already have them;
- you will use a practical approach and methodology, including outcome reporting.

RISKS and MITIGATION

At this stage can you:

- identify and rate the risks posed by and/or to the project;
- outline to us how you will mitigate these risks;
- advise how to monitor and identify new risks;
- identify key dependencies and how they will be managed;
- show how contingencies will be managed;
- show a plan of how/when the project will run from initiation to completion.

BUDGET

- Proposals must provide an estimated summary budget that outlines annual costs, work streams or activities and how funding sources will be spent.
- In-kind funding description/explanation should be included.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- As SFF Futures is about driving innovation for the food and fibre sectors we expect many projects will develop new intellectual property (IP).
- We know that for some SFF Futures funded projects the IP developed may have a commercial value that needs to be owned and protected.
- So we won't have a rigid approach to IP, there will be some flexibility to ensure the balance of *public good* to New Zealand, and the commercial benefits against investment, is achieved.

WHAT'S THE PROCESS

Next steps for you

STEP ONE: Now that you've had the chance to read through this information it's time to get in touch with MPI to discuss your idea. You can reach us on 0800 00 83 33 or email sff.futures@mpi.govt.nz. We also encourage you to read the detailed Applicant Guidelines, they can be found at:

[SFF Futures Applicant Guidelines](#)

STEP TWO: After talking with MPI, and if your project appears eligible, you will be invited to submit an Application. This form can be sent to you from sff.futures@mpi.govt.nz. Note that no matter the size of your project this step must be completed.

STEP THREE: MPI will check your Application is eligible, then assess it against the criteria. From here the process differs dependant on the funding level sought:

- for Small Grants MPI will approve or decline your application with its assessment process;
- for Large Grants MPI will assess with oversight from an independent panel;
- for Small Partnerships (\$2-\$5 million and Partnerships [\$5 million+]) both MPI and an independent panel will assess the Application to determine if it then proceeds to Business Case and on to a final assessment.

CONTRACTING: We know time is precious so we have set our own targets from application to a completed contract, but we will need your prompt response along the way.

Small Grants	3 months
Grants	6 months
Small Partnerships	12 months
Partnerships	12 months

WITHDRAWING: If withdrawing from the Application process, please advise MPI so we can understand your reasons and use this feedback to make improvements to the SFF Futures process.

0800 00 83 33
sff.futures@mpi.govt.nz
sff-futures.mpi.govt.nz