



Aquaculture Planning Fund – Applicant Guidelines

Background Information	2
Aquaculture Planning Fund	2
What does the APF support?	2
What does the APF not support?	2
The Application Process	2
Notes to help you complete the Application Form	3
The Assessment Process	5
Confidentiality	5
Project Management and Contracting Information	6
Intellectual Property	6
Reporting requirements	6
MPI publicity	7
Acknowledgement of Funding	7
Appendix 1 – Aquaculture Planning Fund assessment criteria	8

Background Information

Aquaculture Planning Fund

The Ministry for Primary Industries' (MPI's) Aquaculture Planning Fund (APF) supports regional councils to plan for sustainable aquaculture growth and development.

It does this by funding projects that:

- Change regional coastal plans to provide for new or additional aquaculture development opportunities
- Provide science and other relevant background information which would support plan changes or reviews and enable aquaculture growth.

The APF is a practical initiative and part of Government's commitment to fostering well-planned and sustainable aquaculture growth.

What does the APF support?

- Provisions to deal with allocation of space
- Creation of zones for new consent applications
- Providing support for farming new species
- Improved provisions to deal with environmental impacts
- Scientific and other research, information and advice, and evidence-based standards, to support decision making
- Improved re-consenting provisions and process.

What does the APF not support?

MPI will not fund projects:

- where council proposes funding less than 50% of the project cost
- where the benefits to sustainable aquaculture growth are low or uncertain
- that are unlikely to succeed, and the adverse environmental effects cannot be adequately managed
- which are inconsistent with legal requirements under the Resource Management Act
- that are applied for by an agency that is not a regional or unitary council.

The Application Process

The APF is open for applications anytime during the year. Applications are assessed as they are received. The application assessment process will take one month.

Read these guidelines, including the sections on Project Management and Contracting, to initially determine your project's eligibility. Each application will be assessed and scored using the Assessment Criteria in Appendix 1.

Download and complete the application form and develop up a detailed project budget.

Save your completed application using the fund title and project name and submit your application electronically to aquaculture@mpi.govt.nz. Include your project title in the email subject line.

Notes to help you complete the Application Form

Applications must be no longer than six pages with no more than six pages of appendices and attachments.

- Project Title – provide a **short** title for the project (not a description)
- Council's Legal Name – the name of the regional council applying. MPI will contract this council to deliver the project
- Proposed Start / End Date – the dates that your project will commence and finish within government financial years of 1 July – 30 June
- APF Funding Amount Requested – the total grant required (exclusive of GST)
- Total project value – the project total including council and other contributions.

The following information refers to section one in the Application Form:

1. Project Summary

Summarise your project in less than 150 words. What are the main objectives and outcomes, how will they be achieved and who will benefit? This section needs to provide a good overview of the whole project application for quick reference. If your project is successful, this information will be placed on the APF page of MPI's website.

2. Why is this project needed?

Describe how your project will lead to additional sustainable aquaculture growth and improved coastal planning for aquaculture in line with the government's aquaculture objectives. How urgent is the issue the project needs to address?

3. How will the project contribute to the government's goal and objectives for aquaculture?

Include information on how the project links to the Government's Aquaculture Strategy and any other regional aquaculture initiatives.

4. What are the project's economic benefits?

Describe how this project will contribute to tangible economic benefits and encourage industry investment. Please provide contextual information on the size and nature of the industry and the expected improvements /expansion this project will deliver.

5. How will the project lead to good environmental outcomes?

Describe how this project will deliver good environmental outcomes and manage any adverse environmental effects. Please provide examples to quantify this.

6. How will the project benefit Māori?

Describe how this project will support iwi economic and cultural strategies and lead to good settlement and development benefits.

7. How will the project create social benefits and social growth?

Describe how this project will support broader social benefits. Please provide examples of the expected benefits.

8. Management of project risk

Describe the risks that may be posed in carrying out this project. What are the barriers to success and how will these risks be mitigated?

9. Support for project

Please provide evidence the project is supported by council and included in council planning documents.

10. Project Expenditure Budget

Please also provide a separate detailed budget as an attachment to the application in the template provided on the APF website. All figures in the table must be GST exclusive. The budget should outline project expenses and include detailed costings. Note: The expense budget must align with the project's income statement.

The following information refers to the Application Form's Appendices:

11. Project Resources (Appendix 1):

List the project manager and project team members working on the project. These people must have agreed to support, manage and deliver the project and act as a part of the project team.

Someone with an appropriate level of financial skills is required as the financial manager – this must be someone other than the project manager.

The role of "Other Resources" needs to be clearly defined in the project. These roles can include science, technology and external providers, including any external consultants.

12. Milestones and Activities (Appendix 2):

Milestones are major stages or outputs of a project and are the key to achieving the overall objective of the project. The milestone table will become the main basis for contracting the project deliverables, so must include sufficient detail to enable the APF to monitor progress and substantiate payments. Milestones should be specific, measurable, achievement-focused and time-bound.

With each milestone a success measure or evidence of successful completion must be detailed. Once your project has demonstrated successful delivery of the milestone and evidence of the success, then MPI is able to make the associated payment. This is upon submission of the appropriate documentation to MPI.

Milestone table:

- *Completion Date* - For each milestone please provide a planned completion date, timed with planned APF payments.
- *Description* - Describe the major milestones for your project. Be clear and concise.
- *Activities* - Describe the set of activities underpinning the achievement of each milestone.
- *Evidence of Completion* – provide evidence of each milestone being completed e.g. a report, presentation etc.
- *APF Funding* - Provide an estimated cost to MPI for completing each milestone. Totals for each financial year must equal the annual APF request in the Income Statement.
- *Council Funding* - Provide an estimated cost to the council for completing each milestone.
- *Total* – Both APF and Council funding combined. These figures should match the values in your expenditure budget.

13. Council Details (Appendix 3):

Include the project title and relevant contact details. Also insert the bank account number and GST number for the council.

The Assessment Process

All projects are assessed by an Advisory Panel which meets when an application is received. The panel consists of MPI aquaculture staff who have knowledge of government priorities and aquaculture work programmes.

The assessment is based on the information provided in the application form. MPI staff may collect further commentary from independent sources to provide additional context. Each project is scored against each of the assessment criteria and then ranked by total score. Applicants, successful and unsuccessful, are notified of results by email.

NB: The Minister of Oceans and Fisheries is not involved in the assessment process.

Confidentiality

Information in project applications will usually be limited to the APF team, panellists, and other MPI staff. However, a summary of successful projects will be placed on the MPI website, in discussion with applicants.

MPI is a government agency and is required to supply all information it holds in compliance with the Official Information Act.

If the council considers any part of their project to be confidential then they must make a written request at the time of submission. The request should specify the party(s) whom the applicant does not wish to view the application and the reasons why.

Project Management and Contracting Information

An MPI Adviser will contact the appropriate council staff to negotiate a formal contract.

Applicants should note the following information before applying to APF as it will be reflected in the contract for your agreement:

Intellectual Property

MPI will not own any intellectual property (IP) developed, discovered or created during the course of undertaking APF funded projects, including (but not limited to) any copyright in final reports and documents, but will require an unfettered licence to that IP. This provides greater flexibility to MPI to ensure the IP is used to maximise benefits for New Zealand land-users. It does not alter the APF's fundamental/default policy of making APF information available as widely as possible within New Zealand's primary industries. It ensures that the public good generated from the use of public funds through APF is achieved.

In recognition of the public good objective of the fund, the MPI contracts include an IP clause requiring an unfettered licence which allows MPI to use copy and distribute any IP developed, discovered or created during the course the project on a non-exclusive, royalty-free basis.

The Applicant Group must make any such IP available on request, and at no charge (except for such reasonable costs as may be approved in writing by MPI).

NB: If there is a compelling reason to restrict IP ownership or access (i.e. to provide exclusivity to the applicant Group or a third party), the applicant should discuss this situation with the APF project adviser at contracting, or as soon as the situation is recognised.

Reporting requirements

The following reporting requirements are required:

- The council will provide written Milestone Reports, evidence of completion and invoices according to the agreed dates within the contract (i.e. the milestone table).
- Claims for payments will be lodged as invoices against milestones and certified correct by both the project manager and the project's financial manager. Note: Proof of expenditure must be made available as per the descriptions of agreed milestones.
- Claims for payments must be supported by Milestone Reports (in a format agreed with MPI) lodged by the project manager.
- The council must keep correct accounts for performance validation and audit purposes.

MPI funded projects can be randomly selected for performance validation by an auditor. The auditor will request the project's associated reporting and financial records to assess the project's financial management and milestone progress. MPI may also ask for a copy of the accounts to be supplied with any payment request.

Final payment may be withheld until MPI receives a satisfactory final report of achievements and accounts.

Failure to comply with the contractual agreement may result in the withdrawal of funding support.

MPI publicity

MPI reserves the right to use information regarding grant funded projects for publicity purposes.

Acknowledgement of Funding

The Ministry for Primary Industries must be acknowledged as a source of funding in all publications and publicity regarding grant funded projects. MPI may specify the form and content of such acknowledgement.

For further information, contact:

Aquaculture Planning Fund, aquaculture@mpi.govt.nz



Appendix 1 – Aquaculture Planning Fund assessment criteria

Assessment Criteria: Applications will be assessed against the council business case and prioritised to decide which projects are funded

Weighting	Criteria	Description	Information Sources	0	1, 2 or 3	4, 5 or 6	7, 8 or 9
Reasons for the project – the business case should explain the reasons why the project is required				SCORE			
12.5%	Need	Why is this project needed? How will the project contribute to improved coastal planning and decision-making for aquaculture and its timing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council business case Existing regional plan provisions 	No evidence the project will contribute to improved coastal planning [DECLINE APPLICATION]	Minor benefits only and no clear linkage to improved planning processes	The project would contribute to future planning but timing unclear	The project clearly contributes to improved coastal planning and decision-making within reasonable timeframes
12.5%	Strategic alignment	How will the project contribute to strategic goals and objectives for aquaculture? Is the funding requested an appropriate level of government investment given the project's goals/objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's Aquaculture Strategy Industry and Regional Growth Strategies Settlement priority regions and negotiations Catalyst for future growth opportunities Value for money analysis 	Not a priority at this time [DECLINE APPLICATION]	Low strategic priority	Medium strategic priority	High strategic priority – project clearly linked to strategic growth objectives
Expected benefits/disadvantages				SCORE			
20%	Economic Benefits	Economic benefits (direct and indirect) can come from coastal planning that supports new space, better use of existing space, and the adoption of innovation and new technologies. Preference will be given to proposals that would result in tangible economic benefits and encourage industry to invest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry support and willingness to invest Fit with industry growth plans and priorities Independent economic analysis Regional economic development reports Expected compliance cost savings 	Industry unwilling or unable to invest in new aquaculture in the region	Industry may consider investing but some constraints currently exist and economic benefits low or unclear	Industry will likely invest. Reasonable level of information to suggest moderate economic benefits	Industry fully support application and will invest Good economic benefits and supported by good information
10%	A healthy aquatic environment	Aquaculture growth must be environmentally sustainable. Preference will be given to projects that deliver good environmental outcomes and manage any adverse environmental effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice from aquaculture technical group Guidance on the standards of ecological impact assessments for aquaculture Options to avoid remedy or mitigate environmental effects Council State of the Environment Report 	Environmental effects of proposed aquaculture growth are significant and can't be managed [DECLINE APPLICATION]	Concern about effects and insufficient information to demonstrate these can be adequately managed; doesn't contribute to improved understanding of effects	Likely effects can be managed and/or proposed development can be modified to lessen risk	Conclusive science that demonstrates effects are minor and/or can be fully managed
10%	Benefits to Māori	Māori are important players in aquaculture and their involvement is expected to grow in the future. Preference will be given to projects that benefit Māori through investment in new growth or assisting settlement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Māori support for project Aquaculture objectives in iwi fisheries plans Regional Settlement opportunities Iwi economic and cultural strategies 	Iwi opposed to application and/or new aquaculture development opportunities	Iwi indifferent to application and/or new aquaculture development opportunities	Iwi give general support to the application and are interested in new aquaculture	Strong confirmed iwi support Likely good settlement and development benefits
10%	Social Benefits	Aquaculture can support broader social benefits through job creation and enhanced community cohesion. Preference will be given to projects that would support social growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community views on aquaculture Social benefit assessments Benefits of current regional aquaculture Decile ratings and social development plans 	Majority of community do not support aquaculture No social benefits expected	Unclear whether community will support Social benefits low	Community generally supportive but opposition from some groups Likelihood of social benefits	Majority of community and key stakeholders supportive Clear social benefits
Major risks to the project realising the expected benefits				SCORE			
25%	Aggregated risk profile	It is important to identify and assess the major risks to the project delivering its objectives and benefits. (An aggregated risk profile will be used.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior or proposed community collaboration Known stakeholder views Council and councilor commitment Previous aquaculture history Council project management capacity Council assessment of risks/ mitigation DOC support Legal complexity of plan change/proposal UAE test issues 	Project unlikely to succeed [DECLINE APPLICATION]	High risk	Medium risk	Low risk