

31 March 2025

s9(2)(a)

Mālo e lelei s9(2)(a)

RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST (REF: DOIA035-2024/25)

On 3 March 2025, you contacted the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding the Tauola Business Fund application and selection process. I have outlined your specific request and my response below.

1. How were applications assessed?

All applications were required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- An ability to create employment opportunities for Pacific peoples
- A commitment to improving Pacific participation in the labour market
- An ability to increase productivity and scale up
- Job creation within six months of receiving funding
- Build capacity and capability to participate in economic development projects
- Good health and safety practices

High value applicants were also required to provide the following financial documents:

- Balance Sheet Statement for two consecutive periods: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 and 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- Profit and Loss Statement for two consecutive periods: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 and 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- Cashflow Statement

All applications underwent a structured, multi-stage assessment to ensure alignment with the Tauola Business Fund's objectives. All applicants were evaluated at each stage based on economic potential, job creation impact, business maturity, demonstration of key elements such as financial management, risk strategy, and marketing capability.

Auckland

9 Ronwood Ave, Manukau
PO Box 97005,
South Auckland Mail Centre 2240
P: 09 265 3200

Wellington National Office

Level 2, 44 The Terrace
Wellington, 6011
PO Box 833, Wellington 6143
P: 04 473 4493

Christchurch

Level 1, BNZ Centre
120 Hereford St
Private Bag 4741,
Christchurch 8011

Applicants also had to meet strict quantitative benchmarks to ensure financial viability and scalability. Those that successfully passed all stages were then reviewed by an independent evaluation panel, including external experts, ensuring fairness, transparency, and strategic alignment.

2. What was the marking criteria?

Please refer to my response to your first question.

3. Who were the assessors, and what were their credentials in evaluating applications?

The independent evaluation panel were represented by prominent business experts and senior leaders of the Ministry. The panel consisted of the following members:

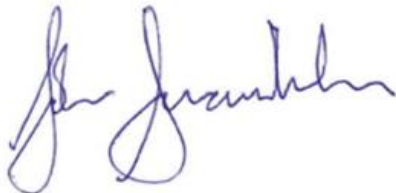
- Matthew Parr – Partner PwC
- Paul Retimanu – Chair of the Pacific Business Trust
- Raphael Hilbron – Partner Agite Consulting
- Mata'afa Florence Malama – Acting Deputy Secretary, Commissioning & Partnerships, Ministry for Pacific Peoples
- Danilo Coelho de Almeida – Deputy Secretary, Corporate & Support Services, Ministry for Pacific Peoples

In line with standard OIA practice, the Ministry proactively publishes some of its responses to OIA requests. As such, this letter may 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 organisation.

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at: oia_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.

Mālō 'aupito



John Tu'amoheloa

Deputy Secretary, Commissioning and Partnerships