



Interim Research Investment Plan

Financial Year 2019-2020

hrcnz

Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to present the HRC's first Investment Plan, covering a wide range of opportunities to undertake health research, build research careers and foster international collaboration in excellent research that benefits New Zealanders and New Zealand. The goal of this plan is to send clear investment signals for the coming year and provide a 'one-stop' reference guide to what the HRC is offering and the relative distribution of our investment.

Our next Investment Plan will be three years and draw heavily on the results of the current consultation to develop a health research prioritisation approach for New Zealand government investment. In the interim, we continue to offer familiar awards under the usual mechanisms and Research Investment Streams. Collaboration and co-ordination in both the funding and research realms is also a strong theme for the HRC and I'm delighted to announce a new collaborative venture, through our Partnership Programme, that will address an issue of key importance to our country. A decision on the nature of the opportunity will be made in 2019/20. Please look out for HRC alerts in the coming year.

We have already moved in response to the New Zealand Health Research Strategy and made some important changes. We have strengthened our investment processes to target a pathway to impact in the research we fund, and we have developed a Māori health advancement criterion that will allow researchers of all disciplines to understand and define their work within the framework of the Treaty of Waitangi. These changes benefit everyone, allowing us to work together to show the difference that research makes, and challenge misconceptions. The criterion was developed to demonstrate how researchers can work with Māori to reduce health inequities, realise the potential and opportunities provided by indigenous models and knowledge and honour the principles of the Treaty. However, we do more than

challenge, we support change when it is needed. Our staff work hard to ensure the sector understands the reason for change and we welcome feedback and challenge ourselves.

There are, in fact, many excellent examples of researchers from all disciplines showing how to lean into the health system for impact and connect with communities and next-users of research for relevance, and to deliver Māori health advancement. We have drawn inspiration from these examples to develop a system that everyone will be able to understand and follow. One size does not fit all, and expectations vary according to the nature and goals of the research. However, we expect that this will be done, and done well, for all the research that we contract. Our commitment to reducing health inequities is a strong theme throughout the opportunities described in this document.

My very best wishes to our researchers in applying for the opportunities described. I look forward to seeing more of the incredible, innovative health research that you submit every year. I ask you to remember that our funds cannot extend to include all of the research that we wish to support and that you not be too discouraged if your application is declined. Often this is no reflection on the nature or quality of the research presented. Each year brings new opportunities and we are doing our best to maximise those for both researchers, and for those who ultimately benefit from health research – our people. Ngā mihi nui



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lester Levy'.

Dr Lester Levy,
CNZM
Chair

Contents

Chair's Foreword.....	1
Contents.....	2
Section 1: Introduction	4
Purpose of the Investment Plan	4
Information on the HRC's processes for applicants.....	4
Relevant government strategies	4
The New Zealand Health Research Strategy.....	4
Vision Mātauranga	5
The HRC's vision and mission	6
Section 2: Our current investment structure	7
The HRC's recent investment trends	7
Rationale for investment in Each Output.....	8
Output 1: Health Research Contracts.....	8
Output 2: Career Development Contracts	8
Output 3: Co-Funding Relationships	8
Output 4: Contribution to Policy, Regulatory and Ethical Frameworks	8
Investment Estimates for Financial Year 2019/2020.....	8
Research Investment Streams	9
Section 3: Overarching investment signals for financial year 2019/2020	10
The Government has signalled certain priorities.....	10
The HRC has developed a set of investment signals for the coming financial year	10
What changes are we making?.....	11
We will continue to employ rigorous investment processes	15
Excellence.....	15
Impact.....	15
Innovation.....	16
Our key decision-making drivers	16
Section 4: Funding opportunities for financial year 2019/2020	18
Output 1: Health Research Contracts	18
Output 2: Career Development Contracts	21
Māori health research career development opportunities	23
Pacific health research career development opportunities	25
Output 3: Co-funding Relationships	27
The Partnership Programme	27
Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery.....	28

International Collaborations.....	28
Output 4: Contribution to Policy, Regulatory and Ethical Frameworks	29
The HRC Ethics Committee	29
Data Monitoring Core Committee (DMCC).....	29
Gene Technology Advisory Committee (GTAC)	29
Standing Committee on Therapeutic Trials (SCOTT).....	29
Appendix 1: Alignment of the HRC's funding opportunities with the NZHRS	30

Section 1: Introduction

Purpose of the Investment Plan

This document provides information for the health research community about the Health Research Council of New Zealand's (the HRC) funding intentions in the 2019/2020 financial year, including:

- useful resources for funding applicants
- an overview of the HRC's current investment structure
- upcoming changes to application and assessment criteria
- a summary of the HRC's strategic decision drivers
- upcoming funding opportunities.

This Investment Plan applies to funding opportunities offered in the 2019/2020 financial year.

This is an interim Investment Plan and in future our Investment Plans will cover three financial years.

Information on the HRC's processes for applicants

Applicants should read the following guidance documents in conjunction with this Investment Plan, depending on the nature of the funding opportunity:

- The HRC Research Investment Streams (RIS)
- The Peer Review Manual and/or Career Development Awards (CDA) Peer Review Manual
- The HRC Research Ethics Guidelines
- The Māori Health Research Guidelines
- The Pacific Health Research Guidelines.

¹ Available at: www.hrc.govt.nz

² Available at: <https://gateway.hrc.govt.nz/>

These documents can be found on the HRC website¹, grouped with other valuable information on the HRC Gateway².

This is also where application guidelines can be found for current Requests for Proposals (RFPs), a copy of the HRC research contract and the New Zealand Standard CV template.

Relevant government strategies

The HRC aligns all its operations with the key government strategies relating to health research. These are:

- The New Zealand Health Research Strategy
- The New Zealand Health Strategy
- The Government's published strategy relating to research, science and innovation (currently the National Statement of Science Investment, which is being refreshed for re-publication under a new title)
- He Korowai Oranga
- Vision Mātauranga
- 'Ala Mo'ui: Pathways to Pacific Health and Wellbeing
- The New Zealand Disability Strategy
- The Strategic Science Investment Fund (SSIF) Investment Plan.

The New Zealand Health Research Strategy

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the Ministry of Health and the HRC are leading the implementation of the New Zealand Health Research Strategy (NZHRS)³.

³ Available at:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/nz-health-research-strategy-jun17.pdf>

The three agencies are in the process of finalising the work undertaken for Action 1: Prioritise investments through an inclusive priority-setting process⁴. A prioritisation approach for investing in health research is due to be announced by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Research, Science and Innovation in 2019.

The HRC is committed to aligning investments, capacity building measures and processes with the vision, actions and priorities that arise from implementation.

In keeping with the NZHRS and government priorities for health research, we have a major emphasis on improving health outcomes by funding research that contributes to reducing the impact of inequity and poverty on health and increasing the impact of all the research we fund in the coming year.

The HRC's future Investment Plans will reflect the health research priorities identified in the prioritisation approach. In the interim, our investment signals are aligned with government priorities and the strategies listed above. We provide a summary of the alignment of our funding opportunities with the NZHRS in Appendix 1.

Vision Mātauranga

The HRC contributes strongly to Vision Mātauranga outcomes through established investment processes to foster Māori development research and building capacity and capability to undertake health research that is unique in New Zealand. We invest approximately \$2 million annually from the Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund specifically in research of this nature and drive further investment into Māori health research with specific Project and Programme contracts and a raft of Career Development Awards that encompass every career stage.

Aligning with the mission of the Vision Mātauranga Strategy, all the HRC's processes and investments in the realm of Māori health research are designed to 'unlock the

innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people to assist New Zealanders to create a better future' – one that is both healthy and equitable.

Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund

The HRC administers a portion of the Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund discretely to support the development of people and organisations undertaking research that supports the four themes of Vision Mātauranga: indigenous innovation, environmental sustainability, health and social wellbeing, and exploring indigenous knowledge.

Through this fund, the HRC invest in the health and social wellbeing theme, while MBIE administer the remainder of the fund for the other themes using the Connect and Placement Schemes. The Connect Scheme seeks to build new connections between Māori organisations and the science and innovation system. The Placement Scheme seeks to enhance the development of individuals through placements in partner organisations. In alignment with the investment signals⁵ published by MBIE, the HRC's funding opportunities supported by this fund aim to:

- strengthen capability, capacity, skills and networks between Māori and the science and innovation system
- increase understanding of how research can contribute to the aspirations of Māori organisations and deliver benefit for New Zealand.

We currently offer Ngā Kanohi Kitea research contracts, which focus on developing Māori capability and knowledge, and developing capacity within communities to engage in research. The Ngā Kanohi Kitea Development Grant assists applicants in preparing and developing a proposal for a Full Project Grant.

⁴ Work to implement other actions of the NZHRS is underway concurrently.

⁵ See the Te Punaha Hihiko: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund Investment Plan for investment signals. Available at:

<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/7f170ccdf1/investment-plan-2018-te-punaha-hihiko.pdf>

The Ngā Kanohi Kitea Full Project Grant provides opportunities for iwi, hapū and other community groups to address community-identified health needs. More information on these funding opportunities for the 2019/2020 financial year is in Section 4.

The HRC will be reviewing these funding opportunities to ensure strong alignment with the objectives of the Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund. Changes will be signalled in future Investment Plans and introduced in the 2020/2021 financial year.

The HRC's vision and mission

The HRC is a Crown agent and the government's principal funder of health research with its own board, the HRC Council.

We are answerable to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Research, Science and Innovation. Our functions are set out in the Health Research Council Act 1990 and include advising our Ministers on priorities for health research, negotiating funding for health research, fostering the health research workforce and initiating and supporting health research. Please see the HRC website for more information about the HRC.

Everything that we do is ultimately designed to tangibly improve the health and wellbeing of those that need it the most.

Section 2: Our current investment structure

The HRC's total Crown funding for the 2019/2020 financial year is \$126.3 million from the following Crown appropriations:

- Science and Innovation: Health Research Fund
- Science and Innovation: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund
- Science and Innovation: Catalyst Fund
- Science and Innovation: Research Contract Management
- Vote Health.

Aside from operational costs, the HRC invests this funding across four key health research outputs:

- Output 1: Health Research Contracts
Investment in knowledge and solutions proposed by our brightest minds – contestable funding opportunities available annually.
- Output 2: Career Development Contracts
Investment in building people, skills and

careers – recruiting and retaining future leaders to address health challenges and create innovations for New Zealand.

- Output 3: Co-Funding Relationships
Engaging and connecting to bring together the people, agencies and resources needed to tackle important health and social issues, and invest in knowledge and solutions.
- Output 4: Contribution to Policy, Regulatory and Ethical Frameworks
Our committees are a key national resource, providing advice on research ethics, monitoring and regulation.

The HRC's recent investment trends

An increase in funding as a result of the Strategic Refresh⁶ of the HRC's operations in 2015 has enabled the investment set out in Table 1⁷.

Table 1. HRC investments across funding Outputs in the current and previous financial years

	FY 2017/18 Investment (audited)	FY 2018/19 Investment (prospective)	Approximate proportion of total HRC investment
Output 1: Health Research Contracts	\$93,965,000	\$98,940,000	88%
Output 2: Career Development Contracts	\$8,510,000	\$10,282,000	8-9%
Output 3: Co-Funding Relationships	\$3,314,000	\$3,340,000	3%
Output 4: Contribution to Policy, Regulatory and Ethical Frameworks	\$303,000	\$371,000	<1%

⁶ Available at: http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/HRC%20refresh%20report_1_0.pdf

⁷ See the HRC's Statement of Performance Expectations for more detail on our revenue and investment across

each output. Estimates for financial year 2019/2020 are expected to be published around June 2019. Available at: <http://hrc.govt.nz/news-and-publications/publications/corporate>

Rationale for investment in Each Output

Output 1: Health Research Contracts

As the HRC is the principal government health research funder in New Zealand and the primary source of funding for a wide and varied workforce, we allocate the majority of our investment in our investigator-led, applied research contracts. These return outstanding results from allowing researchers to use their creativity to address the signals that we send through our Research Investment Streams (RIS), set out on page 9.

Output 2: Career Development Contracts

We allocate nearly a tenth of our investment to career development areas because we see it as critical and take responsibility for ensuring that this capacity is built and maintained. Our investment in Output 2 takes into account that investment for Masters and PhD level awards is directed through the universities. Our investments are additional and focus solely on Māori, Pacific and clinical career development awards – with one prestigious award for building future research leaders, regardless of ethnicity or discipline. Through our leadership awards we ensure that succession planning for our future workforce is addressed.

Output 3: Co-Funding Relationships

The HRC's investment in Output 3 is relatively small at 3%. This investment is doubled by funding partners, meaning that the HRC can maximise the returns on a relatively small investment. Investment levels reflect the fact that partnerships need to be established and maintained in order to efficiently allocate funding and, as a result, the HRC is cautious not to ring-fence more than can be spent on high-priority research in a single financial year.

This is the area in which the greatest shift in spending is likely to occur after the national prioritisation approach is published, as the HRC seeks to address specific issues with cross-government partners. We are already signalling new investment in this area (see page 14).

Output 4: Contribution to Policy, Regulatory and Ethical Frameworks

Our funding for activities under Output 4 is provided by the Ministry of Health and is sufficient to run the committees that play a critical role in ensuring the safety of the health research environment in New Zealand. More information on these committees is set out on page 28.

Investment Estimates for Financial Year 2019/2020

The HRC estimates expenditure⁸ for the 2019/2020 financial year by parliamentary appropriation as follows:

Science and Innovation: Health Research Fund	\$115,220,000
Science and Innovation: Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund	\$2,295,000
Science and Innovation: Catalyst Fund	\$845,000
Total	\$118,360,000

The remaining balance of Crown funding from Vote Health and the Science and Innovation: Research Contract Management appropriation is allocated to operational expenses, detailed in the HRC's Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE)⁹.

⁸ Note that expenditure may include revenue in advance.

⁹ Available at: <http://hrc.govt.nz/news-and-publications/publications/corporate>

Research Investment Streams

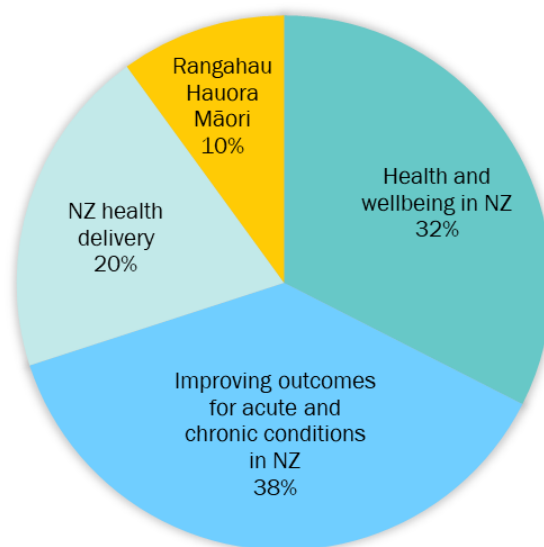
The HRC's investment in health research under Output 1 delivers to four RIS that cover all areas of human health and development.

The RIS are:

- **Health and wellbeing in New Zealand** – Preventing illness and injury and reducing the burden on our health system. Keeping New Zealanders healthy and independent for longer is the major focus, but highly innovative research on how the human body functions in health and disease is also supported, often leading to new diagnostics, drug targets or medical technologies.
 - **Improving outcomes for acute and chronic conditions in New Zealand** – Understanding, prevention, diagnosis and management of acute and chronic conditions, particularly those causing the greatest burden for New Zealand people.
 - **New Zealand health delivery** – Research impacting on the health system and service delivery in the short term. Designed to make a real difference fast, this research will improve the health system and service delivery within three to five years.
- Note that in the 2019/2020 financial year, the timeline for applications within this RIS will differ to the remaining three RIS. See page 14 for additional detail.
- **Rangahau Hauora Māori** – Improving Māori health outcomes and quality of life by building the knowledge and skills needed to reduce health disparities and realise the benefits of Māori paradigms and traditional knowledge for all New Zealanders.

High-quality Māori health research that upholds rangatiratanga and uses and advances Māori knowledge and resources contributes to Māori health gains. This is important in all investment streams, not just the Rangahau Hauora Māori stream.

Figure 1. The average percentage of annual investment across Research Investment Streams since their inception in 2011.



Section 3: Overarching investment signals for financial year 2019/2020

We signal the intended direction of our investment decisions in the 2019/2020 financial year by making our overarching priorities clear.

The Government has signalled certain priorities

Key government priorities for the HRC¹⁰ include:

- Research excellence
- Impact
- Improving equity of health outcomes
- Improving health outcomes of Māori and Pacific peoples
- Climate change
- The intersection between humans, animals and the environment with health, particularly One Health
- Cross-government, cross-sector and international collaboration that will benefit New Zealand
- Connectivity between people, knowledge, capabilities, funding and capital across and within the health sector
- Fostering a strong and diverse health research workforce
- Supporting the National Science Challenges¹¹.

The HRC's funding opportunities align with government priorities in health research and signal a complementary direction to that of the NZHRS.

Appendix 1 demonstrates this alignment. However, it is important to note that the alignment depicted is indicative, based on the nature of the funding opportunity and not

considering specific research topics.

Researchers have an ability to align with all NZHRS strategic priorities using any funding opportunity, depending on the nature of their research.

The HRC has developed a set of investment signals for the coming financial year

The HRC intends to maintain its investment profile for the 2019/2020 financial year by continuing to invest in the funding opportunities already established that align with the NZHRS.

The HRC will work to further advance alignment with government priorities by introducing several new initiatives.

The range of funding opportunities for the 2019/2020 financial year are set out in Section 4, page 18. These opportunities make a significant contribution to addressing government priorities for health and science and innovation.

For this interim Investment Plan, the HRC signals our commitment to continue to invest in capability and capacity building for a strong, effective and diverse health research workforce; facilitating domestic and international collaboration; strengthening connections between researchers and the health sector; strengthening mechanisms for ensuring high-quality research; and addressing issues of health equity in New Zealand. We expect all funded research to be excellent and for the system to be impactful. Examples of the impact our investment makes are detailed in the HRC's Investment Impact Report 2019, due to be published mid-2019.

¹⁰ From the 2019/20 Letter of Expectations, dated 23 May 2019.

¹¹ More information available at: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/science-and-innovation/funding-information-and-opportunities/investment-funds/national-science-challenges/>

What changes are we making?

The HRC strives for continuous advancement in alignment with government priorities and delivery of better health outcomes for all New Zealanders. To that end, we signal some upcoming changes in our investment for the year ahead to ensure that New Zealand can continue to reap optimum impact and opportunity from our investments.

Although we expect further alignment to take place subject to the prioritisation process, the initiatives set out here are designed to be lasting.

We are implementing our Māori Health Advancement criterion

The HRC have developed a Māori health advancement criterion that builds on the Māori responsiveness consideration currently used in applications and assessments for HRC funding opportunities. Through this new criterion, applicants are required to consider ways in which their research proposal will advance Māori health and identify their planned actions to realise this contribution.

For the 2019/2020 financial year, this criterion will apply to Programme applications across all RIS.

The HRC is committed to advancing Māori health (hauora) through the health research that we fund.

Māori health advancement, in the context of health research funded by the HRC, is defined as positive contributions and improvements to Māori health and wellbeing, and reduction in inequities in health and wellbeing, capability and capacity.

The NZHRS states that all health research should incorporate the Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation, and protection. The HRC considers that all health research in New Zealand has the opportunity to advance Māori health and wellbeing by upholding and valuing Māori rights, worldviews and knowledge, and addressing inequities.

As such, the HRC expects all applicants for our funding opportunities to consider all potential ways in which their proposal could advance Māori health and wellbeing, and to outline what actions they will undertake to help achieve this potential. The criterion has been developed to align with the goals of Vision Mātauranga and applies to research that focuses on communities or populations other than Māori too. We acknowledge that the most appropriate approach to advancing Māori health will vary by the nature and scope of research.

For the 2019/2020 financial year, the HRC will require this criterion to be addressed in all Programme applications. Over time, applications for all HRC funding opportunities will need to address the Māori health advancement application criterion.

Guidelines are being developed to support researchers to address this criterion in their applications and will be made available on HRC Gateway in the near future.

We are introducing a Pathways to Impact criterion

Applicants for the following annual funding opportunities will be required to identify pathways to impact in their applications and planned actions to realise this benefit:

- Projects
- Programmes
- Feasibility Studies
- Emerging Researcher First Grants.

The impact of research is influenced by early involvement of knowledge users, embeddedness of projects in existing stakeholder networks, and well-constructed dissemination plans to reach identified research users.

To tangibly improve health outcomes for New Zealanders, everyone in the research ecosystem must be on board to close the research loop. That is, ensuring that research outcomes make their way to the most suitable next-user, whether that be other researchers, policy and decision-makers, clinicians, or future investors, among others.

The HRC relies on researchers being part of the process to identify impact pathways and share research outcomes with us to effect these improvements, and to convey the benefits of health research to the Government, and the general public for continued support. To facilitate this involvement, the HRC has developed a pathways to impact criterion for inclusion in the application processes for Projects, Programmes, Feasibility Studies and Emerging Researcher Grants.

The criterion requires researchers to identify their line of sight to eventual impact and identify what is realistically achievable within their sphere of influence. This aligns with MBIE's vision of impact for the wider science sector.

The criterion does not require every research initiative to have a direct impact, demonstrated in the example on page 13. The case studies of cardiovascular research show many small 'shoots of impact' for next-users along the pathway to the end-user impact at the end of

the branch. The small shoots of impact are an important part of the overall impact story for the HRC to effectively convey to government funders and other stakeholders.

HRC Gateway contains the specific criteria, and the revised forms and guidelines to support researchers to meet the criteria, and assessors will be providing written comment on research impact as part of the assessment process. The HRC will look to align the criteria with additional funding opportunities over time.

We will identify research with high potential for generating value

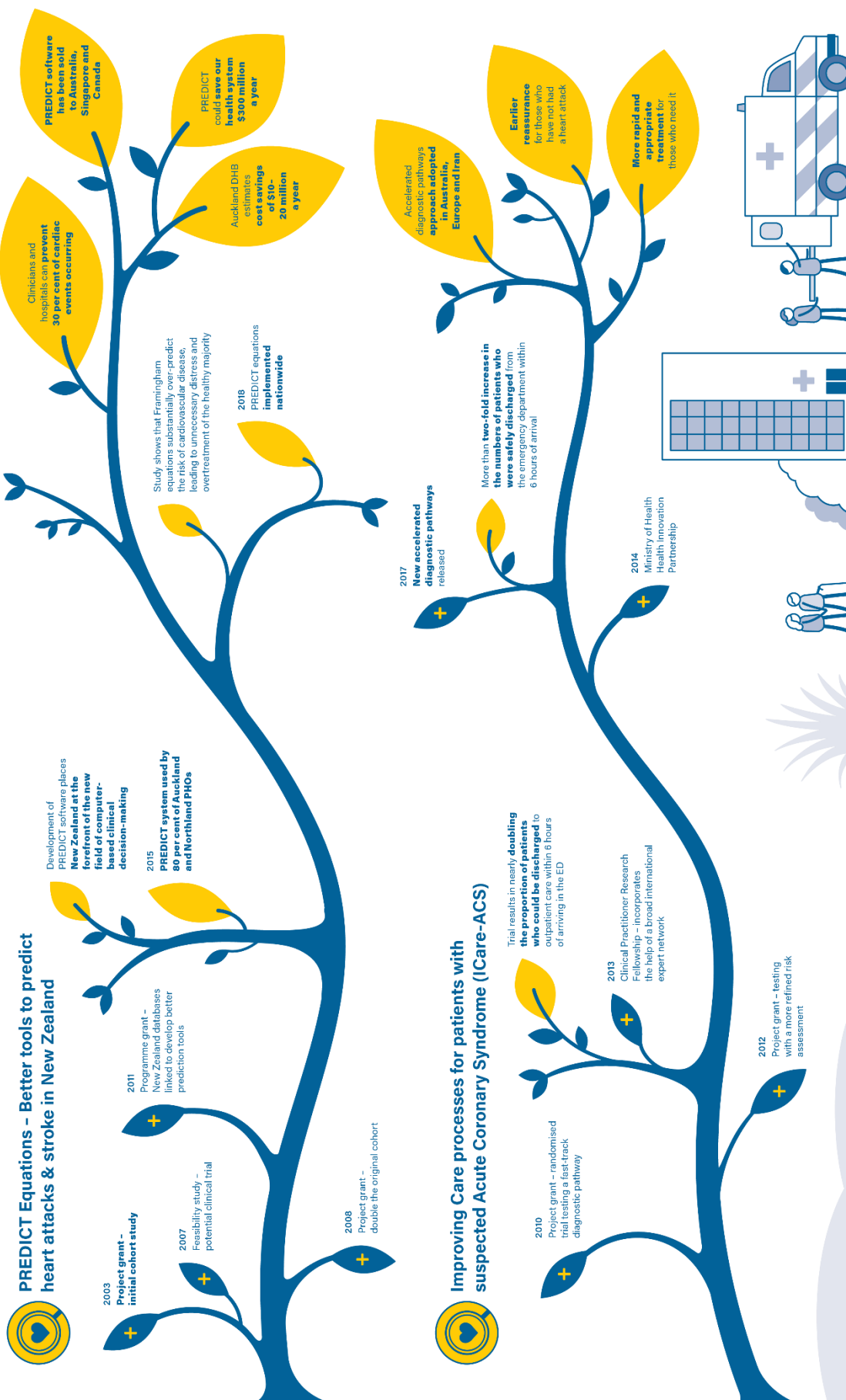
The HRC will set up a process to identify and refer commercial opportunities coming from successful HRC-funded research.

Utilising the pathways to impact criterion, the HRC intends to establish a new process to systematically drive highly innovative HRC-funded research towards tertiary or government innovation and commercialisation programmes. This process would operate within the existing system structures to strengthen platforms for commercialising innovation, increase system connectivity and deliver better value for the public investment in health research.

The HRC, Technology Transfer offices within universities (TTOs), the Commercialisation Partner Network (CPN, e.g. Return on Science and KiwiNet) and Callaghan Innovation all make significant and distinct contributions along the commercialisation pathway, from foundational health research to market.

This new process will be designed in partnership with TTOs, CPNs and MBIE to further strengthen the early stages of the commercialisation pathway through increasing the coordination and connectivity between the HRC, TTOs and CPNs.

Impact of HRC-funded cardiovascular research - two case studies



The process will involve the HRC and CPNs proactively identifying research findings that show high potential for generating commercial value using a joint assessment approach, and informing the research team and TTOs for referral with HRC and CPN endorsement. This ensures support for high-value research at the start of the pipeline, including path-finding support for researchers who may not be trained in commercialisation.

In the first instance, and within the term of this Investment Plan, the HRC intends to establish and pilot this new process for research with high commercial potential, with the expectation that in the future this process could extend to include research with high translation potential (acknowledging that some research will be referred through both mechanisms).

We will launch a new investment opportunity

The HRC will engage in a new investment opportunity to address government priorities. We will seek input from potential partners to identify and deliver this opportunity.

The HRC has approximately \$3-5 million to allocate to new initiatives in the 2019/2020 financial year with an on-going commitment expected in future years.

We intend to launch a new funding opportunity in a priority area, such as:

- health equity
- unmet health need
- healthcare delivery
- climate change and health
- health research infrastructure
- interdisciplinary collaboration
- knowledge mobilisation and translation
- health research workforce.

The HRC's Partnership Programme aims to deliver mission-led research that effectively meets the knowledge and evidence needs of policy-makers, planners and those involved in healthcare delivery.

The HRC will seek to collaborate in enduring partnerships across government agencies to

adequately manage the scope and volume of research, and the extent of capacity building measures required for new priority initiatives to be truly effective.

The new funding opportunity will be agreed with input from partners and in alignment with the health research priorities communicated within the prioritisation approach being announced in 2019.

Researchers should check *Update* and our website for the announcement of new opportunities in mid to late 2019.

We will review the New Zealand health delivery RIS

The HRC will be reviewing and redesigning how we invest in and assess health delivery research.

The redesign of the New Zealand health delivery RIS presents a positive opportunity to optimise the value of the HRC's investment in an area of strategic importance, to work collaboratively with the sector and key stakeholders to improve policy and practice, and to deliver on the strategic priorities of the NZHRS.

The HRC is committed to funding health delivery research and the importance of this research is upheld in the NZHRS, which notes the health sector has a critical role in health services research and in translating research findings to improve health care delivery and health outcomes.

The HRC will work collaboratively with the sector to design a more comprehensive and fit-for-purpose investment opportunity that effectively engages health delivery providers, addresses gaps and builds needed capacity and capability. While this is underway, associated funding opportunities under this RIS will run on a different timeline to the remaining RIS.

The new-look New Zealand health delivery funding opportunities will open towards the last quarter of 2019.

We will continue to employ rigorous investment processes

Investment decisions are made subject to the application and assessment requirements for each funding opportunity, available on HRC Gateway.

As part of the assessment process, peer review is undertaken annually by appointing discipline-based Science Assessing Committees (SAC) with specific expertise for the applications submitted for funding opportunities¹².

The HRC supports diversity in its SACs by tracking several metrics annually. These metrics include gender, international representation, institution and location spread. We also ensure end-users are appropriately considered when assessing research potential, by the inclusion of end-users on our research committees for clinical trials, health delivery and public health. To ensure a tailored and culturally appropriate assessment process, we have specific Māori and Pacific Assessing Committees for Māori and Pacific research proposals respectively.

Further, the HRC has one funding opportunity, the Explorer Grant, whereby the assessment process is blinded to mitigate bias. We also have opportunities strategically designed to encourage diversity and equity, in our Māori and Pacific grants.

Excellence

Excellence is a foundational principle of the HRC. Our assessment processes are evolving to make sure that we can continue to identify excellent health research in all its forms. The HRC has a broad and inclusive approach to excellence for health research¹³. It recognises the value of indigenous knowledge and kaupapa Māori methodologies, the need for new research models to be developed, and

existing models to change and evolve. We see excellent research being ethical, methodologically sound, original, relevant, purposeful and impactful.

We seek excellent research across the entire spectrum of innovation, from very basic to very applied and practical research – and across a full range of research disciplines including biomedical, clinical, health services, public health and social and data sciences.

Impact

The HRC defines impact for health research as the direct and indirect influence of excellent research on individuals, communities or society as a whole, including improvements to health and equity, and other social, economic, cultural or environmental benefits for New Zealand.¹⁴

The HRC's definition of research impact is focused on the creation of 'real-world' benefits for non-academic end-users. The inclusion of 'excellence' signals our ongoing commitment to fund high-quality research, which is a pre-requisite for research impact, but not sufficient to maximise the benefit derived from the research. Our key message is that research impact is not created by researchers alone; but rather, requires communication, relationships and actions that connect academic research to people from organisations beyond academia. The HRC works in partnership with our researchers to capture the results of completed research and ensure that our best examples of impact are appropriately conveyed to government, and the general public. We also incorporate prospective assessment of research impact at an individual grant level, to encourage applicants to consider and realise all potential ways in which their proposal can add value for New Zealand, and ultimately, to increase the collective benefits and impacts from the portfolio of research that we fund.

Our work in this area aligns with the NZHRS, whose vision is to increase the impact of

¹² Refer to our Peer Review Manual, available at: <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/about-us/committees>

^{13, 15} Note that the National Statement of Science Investment (NSSI) adopts sector-wide definitions of Excellence and Impact for the science system as a whole, which are broader than the more specific operational

approach and definitions used by the HRC for the purpose of health research.

¹⁴ The HRC's Statement of Intent 2017-2021. Available at: <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Final%20HRC%20Sol%202017-20.pdf>

government investment in health research. See more detail on our 'pathways to impact' criterion on page 12.

Innovation

Innovation is another foundational principle of the HRC. The health services of tomorrow are built on health research that was often commenced decades before. It is vital that we feed the innovation pipeline with novel research that challenges and shifts established knowledge and identifies new possibilities. Innovation is the stuff that impact is ultimately made of – meaningful discoveries. Those discoveries may be in any discipline, including biomedical, public health and indigenous knowledge. Increasingly, these discoveries are interdisciplinary, connecting research across disciplines.

We want to support novel research that shifts established knowledge and identifies new frontiers for future exploration – we call this 'transformative' research, which we define¹⁵ as:

Research that promises extraordinary outcomes, such as revolutionising entire disciplines; creating entirely new fields; or disrupting accepted theories and perspectives. In other words, those endeavours which have the potential to change the way we address challenges in health.

We have many opportunities that support innovation and transformative research. An example is our Explorer Grants, which are

designed to support high-risk, high-return research with the potential to be truly transformative (see page 20). The new process to identify and refer commercial opportunities coming from successful HRC-funded research proposes to advance certain health research with transformative, commercial potential (see page 12).

Our key decision-making drivers

All investment decisions are underpinned by our three key decision-making drivers, set out in our Statement of Intent 2017-2021¹⁶:

- Making a difference: New knowledge with clear pathways to impact for health and economic gain
- Stimulating growth: building a healthy research ecosystem, with the people, capacity, skills and opportunities that we need for a healthier, more prosperous future
- Increasing engagement and connection: adding value to realise our collection potential.

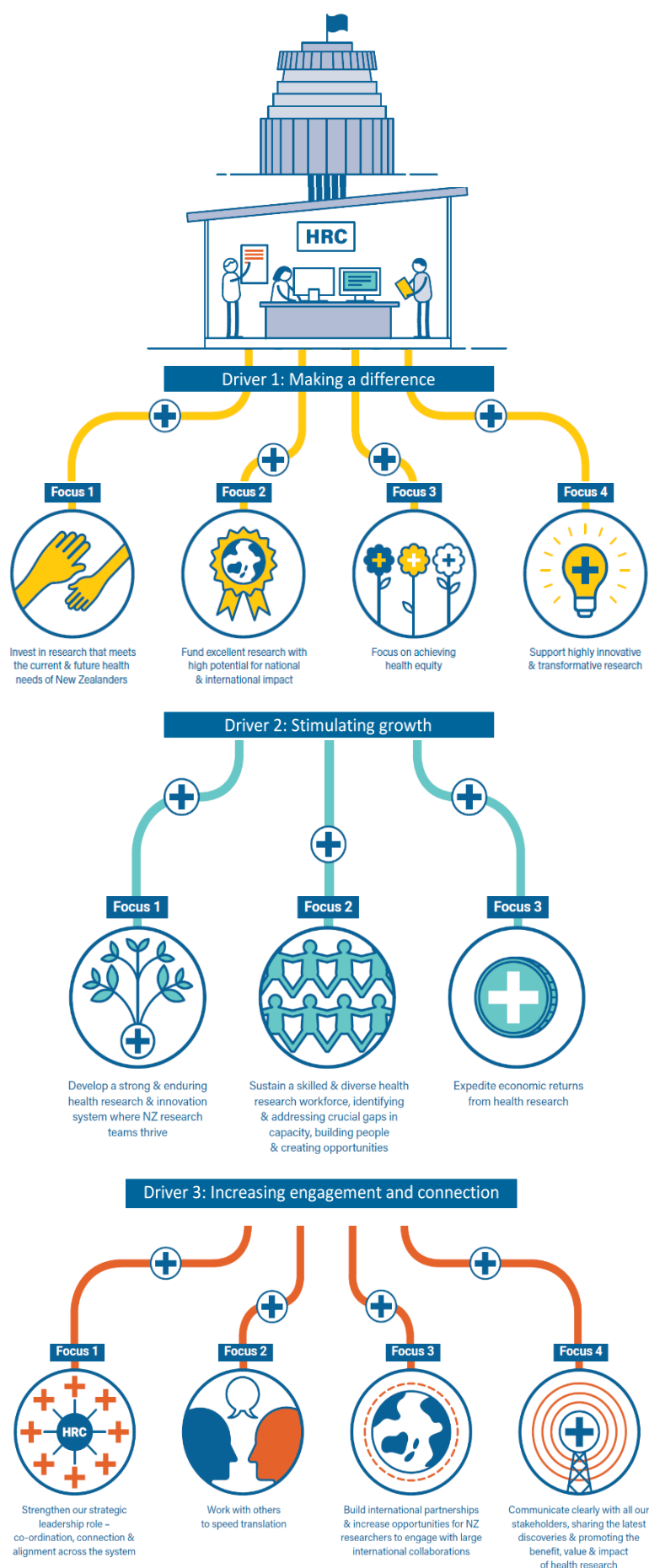
Each of these decision drivers has up to four focus areas, shown overleaf. Our Annual Report 2018¹⁷ sets out what we are trying to achieve through each of these decision drivers in detail and lists the key performance indicators (KPIs) that we use to determine our progress against the goals we have set.

¹⁵ Note that the MBIE Endeavour Fund adopts a definition of transformative research to cover investment that is broader than health research, for which the HRC's definition is tailored.

¹⁶ Available at: <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/news-and-publications/publications/statement-intent>

¹⁷ Available at: <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Annual%20Report%202018.pdf>

The HRC's Decision Drivers and Focus Areas



Section 4: Funding opportunities for financial year 2019/2020

The HRC recognises the important balance between mission-led (or directed) research and investigator-led research to achieve our objectives and offer funding opportunities positioned across this spectrum. All research funded by the HRC can be considered as 'applied', in that there is always an outcome in mind at the start of the research that is relevant and important for health. Researchers are able to initiate research in line with our signals, and our partners can communicate their research needs through our Request for Proposals (RFP) processes.

All our funding opportunities are fully contestable and are detailed in the tables below. Details about each opportunity, including eligibility criteria and application guidelines, are available on the HRC website and HRC Gateway.

Notes:

*The indicative number of respective grants or awards available in the 2019/2020 financial year is an estimate only and the actual number will depend on the demand and quality of applications. Our SPE and Annual Report documents contain more detail on the success rate of applications.

** The call for applications for some funding opportunities begins before the 2019/2020 financial year. Decisions for these funding opportunities are to be announced in mid-2020.

** Also note that a subsequent call for applications for health delivery research will follow towards the last quarter of 2019.

Output 1: Health Research Contracts

- Applicants for health research contracts awarded annually are required to identify the most appropriate RIS to their research proposal:
 - Health and wellbeing in New Zealand
 - Improving outcomes for acute and chronic conditions in New Zealand
 - New Zealand health delivery
 - Rangahau Hauora Māori.
- The RIS will be maintained for investment decisions in the 2019/2020 financial year, however the New Zealand health delivery RIS will run under a different timeframe as it undergoes a redesign. The remaining RIS will be reviewed when the priorities of the NZHRS are published. Each RIS has corresponding signals available on HRC Gateway, along with application guidelines for each of the funding opportunities below.
- Applicants for Health Research Contracts in the 2019/2020 financial year will need to address the respective signals for their chosen RIS, along with the newly introduced pathways to impact and Māori health advancement criterion (for Programme applications), to support tangible improvements to health outcomes of New Zealanders and advancement toward health equity.

Funding opportunity	Value	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
Capability in Independent Research Organisations Fund¹⁸	Total commitment of \$44.95 million: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$27.6 million for years 1-4 \$17.3 million in years 5-7 	No additional investment is anticipated in Financial Year 2019/2020 Review planned	Maintain 4	N/A
Longitudinal Studies¹⁹	Minimum of \$2 million annually, variable duration	Available Review planned upon completion of the National Databases and Collections review by MBIE	Variable	August - October
Programmes	Up to five years, to a maximum of \$5 million	Available	5	August – October
Projects	Up to three years, to a maximum of \$1.2 million or pro rata for a shorter period	Available	50-60	EOI – June/July Full application - October/ November
Pacific Projects	Up to three years, to a maximum of \$1.2 million or pro rata for a shorter period	Available	2	EOI – June/July Full application – October/ November
Emerging Researcher First Grant	Up to three years, to a maximum of \$250,000 (research expenses only)	Available	10-15	July – August

¹⁸ The HRC conducts its assessment processes for the Capability in Independent Research Organisations Fund in alignment with MBIE's Strategic Science Investment Fund (SSIF) by following the criteria set out in Gazette notice *Criteria for the Assessment of Proposals for Capability in Independent Research Organisations Funding by the Science Board*: <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2013-go772>

¹⁹ Note that longitudinal study opportunities are assessed annually with Programmes and Projects.

Funding opportunity	Value	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
Pacific Emerging Researcher First Grant	Up to three years, to a maximum of \$250,000 (research expenses only)	Available	2	July – August
Feasibility Studies	Up to two years, to a maximum of \$250,000	Available	8-12	July – August
Explorer Grant	Up to two years, to a maximum of \$150,000	Available	10-15	October
Ngā Kanohi Kitea Full Project Grant	Up to 18 months, to a maximum of \$200,000	Available Review for alignment with Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund	3-5	January – March
Ngā Kanohi Kitea Development Grant	Up to the value of 5% of the total proposed Full Project budget	Available Review for alignment with Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund	5-10	July – August

Output 2: Career Development Contracts

Career Development Contracts, also known as Career Development Awards (CDAs), help to foster the health research workforce in New Zealand.

A range of awards are available to support the career development of emerging health researchers, including Māori and Pacific health researchers undertaking postgraduate research qualifications.

Application guidelines are available on HRC Gateway for each of the funding opportunities below.

Funding opportunity	Value	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowship	Funding up to \$600,000 is available over four years	Available Review options to further support Hercus Fellows ²⁰	4-6	May - June
Clinical Research Training Fellowship	Funding up to a maximum of \$320,000 to undertake a PhD for up to three years full-time or four years part-time, including a salary, university fees and research expenses	Available	8-10	May - June
Clinical Practitioner Research Fellowship	Funding for a clinician to undertake research, including a salary and \$50,000 per annum for research expenses	Available	1	May - June
Foxley Fellowship	Funding for a salaried sabbatical up to one year full-time or two years part-time, to the value of the	Available	1-2	May – June

²⁰ The HRC will announce any supplementary opportunities to support Hercus Fellows with connectivity and ongoing career development on the HRC website and HRC Gateway, subject to HRC Council approval.

Funding opportunity	Value	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
	applicant's base salary (pro rata) and up to \$20,000 per annum for research expenses			
Girdlers' New Zealand HRC Fellowship	Funding for a two-years stay at the University of Oxford valued at £45,000 per annum, and a third year of support up to \$90,000 in New Zealand	Not available	0	N/A
Ethics Summer Studentship	Summer studentships are valued at \$6,000	Available	5	June - July

Māori health research career development opportunities

The HRC has a number of career development awards available to specifically support the development and dissemination of Māori health research, and Māori health researchers. The NZHRS also recognises the importance of fostering the Māori health research workforce in New Zealand. Having a strong Māori health research workforce is important to ensure Māori responsiveness and participation as we strive for greater health equity; acknowledging that Māori knowledge, people and resources have much to offer all New Zealanders.

Funding opportunity	Value and duration	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
Māori Emerging Leader Fellowship (in partnership with the Ministry of Health)	Funding to the value of \$500,000 over four years	Availability to be confirmed	Availability to be confirmed	Availability to be confirmed
Māori Health Research Development Grant	Funding of \$10,000 for six months	Available	2-4	May - July
Rangahau Hauora Training Grant	Funding up to six months to the value of \$12,000	Available	1-2	May - July
Māori Health Research Preventing and Minimising Gambling Harm Scholarship (administered on behalf of Ministry of Health)	Masters scholarship - a term of one year full-time, or up to two years part-time, including a stipend of \$10,000, payment of course fees up to \$10,000 and working expenses of \$1,600 Postdoctoral scholarship - a term of four years to a total value of \$410,000 which includes a stipend and working expenses	Availability to be confirmed	Availability to be confirmed	Availability to be confirmed
Māori Health Research Postdoctoral Fellowship	Funding for up to four years full-time, including a salary, up to \$100,000 research expenses, a tikanga	Available	1-4	May - July

Funding opportunity	Value and duration	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
	allowance and an annual conference allowance			
Māori Health Research PhD Scholarship	Funding for up to three years, including course fees and up to \$30,000 per annum in personal support, \$10,000 in research expenses and \$5,000 tikanga allowance.	Available	2-5	May - July
Māori Health Research Masters Scholarship	Funding up to \$20,000 for a term of one year full-time or a maximum of two years part-time.	Available	1-4	May - July
Māori Health Research Summer Studentship	Summer studentships are valued at \$5,000.	Available	8-12	May - July
Māori Health Research Knowledge Translation Grant	Funding up to \$5,000.	Available	4-8	May - July

Pacific health research career development opportunities

The primary role of Pacific health research is to generate knowledge and understanding of Pacific peoples that will improve their health outcomes. Pacific health research design, methods, and approaches aim to be responsive to changing Pacific contexts, underpinned by Pacific cultural values and beliefs, and conducted in accordance with Pacific ethical standards, values, and aspirations. We have a number of scholarships and fellowships designed to foster the Pacific health research workforce.

Funding opportunity	Value and duration	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
Sir Thomas Davis Te Patu Kite Rangi Ariki Health Research Fellowship	Funding up to \$300,000 over two years	Available	1	May – July
Pacific Clinical Research Training Fellowship	Funding up to a maximum of \$320,000 to undertake a PhD for up to three years full-time or four years part-time, including a salary, university fees and research expenses	Available	1-3	May – July
Pacific Health Research Preventing and Minimising Gambling Harm Scholarship (administered on behalf of Ministry of Health)	Masters scholarship - a term of one year full-time, or up to two years part-time, including a stipend of \$10,000, payment of course fees up to \$10,000 and working expenses of \$1,600 Postdoctoral scholarship - a term of four years to a total value of \$410,000 which includes a stipend and working expenses	Availability to be confirmed	Availability to be confirmed	Availability to be confirmed
Pacific Health Research Postdoctoral Fellowship	Funding for a salary at a postdoctoral	Available	1-4	May – July

Funding opportunity	Value and duration	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
	fellow level for three years, and up to \$105,000 for research expenses and an annual allowance of \$2,500 to travel to a scientific meeting			
Pacific Health Research PhD Scholarship	Funding for up to three years, including up to \$30,000 per annum in personal support, a \$10,000 grant for research expenses and a \$3,000 grant for mentoring costs	Available	2-5	May – July
Pacific Health Research Masters Scholarship	Funding up to \$20,000 for a term of one year. Additionally, a \$1,000 Tufungatika allowance for mentoring costs and tuition fees is available	Available	1-4	May – July
Pacific Health Research Summer Studentship	Summer studentships are valued at \$5,000	Available	8-12	May – July
Pacific Health Research Knowledge Translation Grant	Funding up to \$5,000	Available	4-8	May – July

Output 3: Co-funding Relationships

The HRC intends to maintain investment in co-funding relationships in the 2019/2020 financial year. We value high-quality research where the problem definition comes from next- and end-users of research. Co-funding is a valuable tool to promote the ownership of health research outcomes by other agencies and to increase the likelihood of translation into tangible change in policy or practice.

Funding opportunity	Value and duration	Investment signal for Financial Year 2019/2020	Approximate number available in Financial Year 2019/2020*	Call for applications**
The Partnership Programme	\$2.5 million total HRC contribution annually Variable value and duration per partnership	Available New investment opportunity expected to be launched Review programme	5-10 initiatives (within partnerships)	Variable
Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery	Variable	Available	Variable	Variable
International Collaborations	Variable	Available	6-9	Variable

The Partnership Programme

The Partnership Programme aims to deliver mission-led research that effectively meets the knowledge and evidence needs of policy-makers, planners and those involved in healthcare delivery.

Partnerships are formed with the following strategic intent:

- fund excellent research that makes a difference to the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders
- meet the evidence needs of our partners and strengthen the links with policy and practice
- partnerships align and contribute to our partners' success.

We currently allocate \$2.5 million annually to partnerships, however the actual value of funding opportunities within the partnership programme varies based on the level of financial contribution from our partners. In the 2019/2020 financial year, the HRC will continue with its existing partnerships under this Programme and will be looking to establish new funding opportunities in one of several priority areas identified on page 14. RFPs are launched on the HRC website and HRC Gateway as funding opportunities occur throughout the year.

The HRC also intends to review the Partnerships Programme in the coming year to ensure it is best designed for targeted impact initiatives, particularly to facilitate research that has end-user engagement embedded.

Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery

The Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery (RPNZHD) initiative aims to provide an evidence base to inform practice or system change and improvement, and support decision-making in the area of health delivery. These partnerships require researchers to work in collaboration with health delivery decision-makers, and for these decision-makers to be involved throughout the research process increasing the likelihood for effective knowledge transfer. The organisation to which the decision-maker belongs is also required to make a minimum contribution (financial or in-kind) towards the research costs.

This initiative is aligned to the New Zealand Health Delivery RIS and research opportunities are announced by RFP on the HRC website and HRC Gateway.

International Collaborations

The HRC will continue development of international collaborations, including those supported by the Catalyst Fund.

The HRC partners with organisations internationally so that New Zealand researchers can be at the centre of global initiatives and have access to opportunities, expertise and infrastructure that is not available here. We also do this to ensure that our funding supports New Zealanders to influence global research efforts and make international and national contributions.

In the 2019/2020 financial year, the HRC will continue its international collaborations via:

- the National Natural Science Foundation of China
- the European Commission Joint Programming Initiative, 'Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life'
- the International Collaborative Indigenous Health Research Partnership
- the tripartite funding agreement with the National Health and Medical Research Council in Australia and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in Canada.

Opportunities are announced on the HRC website and HRC Gateway.

Science and Innovation: Catalyst Fund

The Catalyst Fund supports activities that initiate, develop and foster collaborations leveraging international science and innovation for New Zealand's benefit.

- the Human Frontiers Science Programme
- New Zealand-China Strategic Research Alliance Programme – Non-communicable Diseases
- E-Asia Joint Research Programme
- the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases.

Output 4: Contribution to Policy, Regulatory and Ethical Frameworks

The funding mechanisms under Output 4 are supported by funding from Vote Health. They are not contestable, however form part of the HRC's investment portfolio and contribute to increasing research excellence.

The HRC intends to maintain investment in these committees for the 2019/2020 financial year.

The HRC Ethics Committee

This committee provides independent ethical advice on health research of national importance or great complexity, approves health and disability and institutional ethics committees in New Zealand, considers appeals on disputed decisions for research involving human participants and on the ethics of introducing innovative practices, and produces guidelines on ethical conduct. It is responsible for accrediting all the Health and Disability Ethics Committees (HDECs) and Institutional Ethics Committees (IECs) in New Zealand, along with administering the Data Monitoring Core Committee (below).

Data Monitoring Core Committee (DMCC)

This committee provides objective, independent monitoring of clinical trials in New Zealand. These are primarily large-scale clinical trials initiated by New Zealand researchers relating to life-threatening diseases, or diseases which cause irreversible morbidity, or where there are special concerns regarding patient safety, where the study investigators are inexperienced, or where study integrity could be enhanced by the independence of the DMCC.

Gene Technology Advisory Committee (GTAC)

This committee assesses the scientific merit of New Zealand applications to produce new medical therapies through the transfer of genes from another species to humans, and between species.

Standing Committee on Therapeutic Trials (SCOTT)

This committee assesses, upon request, whether a proposed clinical trial of a medicine will provide clinically and scientifically useful information, particularly in relation to the safety and efficacy of the agent.

Appendix 1: Alignment of the HRC's funding opportunities with the NZHRS

The alignment depicted in this table is indicative, based on the nature of the funding opportunity and not considering specific research topics. Researchers have an ability to align with all NZHRS strategic priorities using any funding opportunity, depending on the nature of their research.

	NZHRS Strategic Priority 1 - Invest in excellent health research that addresses the health needs of all New Zealanders	NZHRS Strategic Priority 2 - Create a vibrant research environment in the health sector	NZHRS Strategic Priority 3 - Build and strengthen pathways for translating research findings into policy and practice	NZHRS Strategic Priority 4 - Advance innovative ideas and commercial opportunities
Output 1: Health Research Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability in Independent Research Organisations Fund • Longitudinal Studies • Programmes • Projects • Emerging Researcher First Grants • Feasibility Studies • Explorer Grants • Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes* • Projects* • Feasibility Studies* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longitudinal Studies • Vision Mātauranga Capability Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability in Independent Research Organisations Fund • Longitudinal Studies • Feasibility Studies • Explorer Grants
Output 2: Career Development Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowship • Clinical Research Training Fellowship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Research Training Fellowship • Clinical Practitioner Research Fellowship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Research Training Fellowship • Clinical Practitioner Research Fellowship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowship • Clinical Practitioner Research Fellowship

- Clinical Practitioner Research Fellowship
- Foxley Fellowship
- Girdlers' New Zealand HRC Fellowship
- Ethics Summer Studentship
- Māori Health Research Emerging Leader Fellowship
- Māori Health Research Development Grants
- Rangahau Hauora Training Grant
- Māori Health Research Preventing and Minimising Gambling Harm
- Māori Health Research Postdoctoral Scholarships
- Māori Health Research Phd Scholarships
- Māori Health Research Masters Scholarships
- Māori Health Research Summer Studentships
- Māori Health Research Knowledge Translation Grants
- Sir Thomas Davis Te Patu Kite Rangi Ariki Health Research Fellowship
- Pacific Clinical Research Training Fellowship
- Foxley Fellowship
- Pacific Clinical Research Training Fellowship
- Māori Health Research Knowledge Translation Grants
- Pacific Clinical Research Training Fellowship

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific Health Research Preventing and Minimising Gambling Harm Scholarships • Pacific Health Research Postdoctoral Fellowship • Pacific Health Research PhD Scholarships • Pacific Health Research Masters Scholarship • Pacific Health Research Summer Studentships • Pacific Health Research Knowledge Translation Grants 				
Output 3: Co-funding Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership Programme • Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery • International Collaborations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership Programme • Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery • International Collaborations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership Programme • Research Partnerships for New Zealand Health Delivery • International Collaborations 	

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