University Research Programme (URP) 2024-26

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What can (and cannot) be funded with a URP

A URP can be used to fund:
- salaries or scholarships awarded to Postdoctoral Fellows and/or Postgraduate Students (PhD or MSc). It can also be used to support Summer and Honours students who are undertaking research related to the URP.
- engagement activities such as a workshop and/or Hui that are relevant to the URP.
- certain (small) equipment pieces/parts, materials/supplies and IT costs. Details can be provided in the full proposal's budget section where appropriate.
- technical training of students and/or postdoctoral fellows.
- (a portion) of overseas support/equipment when it is unavailable in New Zealand. Applicants must demonstrate a benefit back to NZ if using funds for this purpose.

A URP cannot be used to fund:
- organisational overheads
- costs related to "perpetual" or ongoing salaries (e.g. for a lecturer or research assistant or external consultants)
- students based overseas
- conference registrations and/or travel to conferences (or similar events not specific to the URP)
- publishing costs
- new/used large equipment purchases, or fully contracting a non-URP team member to use equipment on behalf of this URP research programme (either here in NZ or overseas).

2. Can a PI or University submit more than one Expression of Interest in the same round?

- Yes. Applicants can submit multiple EoIs and be named as Principal Investigator or Associate Investigator on multiple applications. A URP can also have more than one PI or AI if appropriate, however there should be only one PI as a point of contact who is declared as the "Applicant" on the SmartyGrants form.
- Important to note, Toka Tū Ake EQC is unlikely to award more than one URP to the same PI, however we have previously awarded multiple URPs to the same University (with different PIs). We encourage all applicants to work closely with their University's Research Office to ensure applications are well supported and coordinated.

3. Are assessors involved in both the EoI and Full Proposal Stage assessment process?

- Yes, Toka Tū Ake EQC recruits an Assessment Panel that will evaluate applications at both the EoI and Full Proposal stages. In addition to the Assessment Panel, there is typically an external reviewer sought for specific expert advice to inform the Assessment Panel's recommendation on the Full Proposals and the final decision by Toka Tū Ake EQC.

4. Is Toka Tū Ake EQC favouring any Research Investment Priorities this round?

- No, Toka Tū Ake EQC has not identified any one Research Investment Priority over another in this round of URP 2024-26.
- Historically, "Quantifying Hazards and Impacts" and "Resilient Buildings" research investment priorities have both received significantly more funding over the other investment priorities: Empowering People, Smarter Land Use and Governance and Economics. This is due largely to the more recent identification of these three priorities, plus a lack of research submissions in these areas.
- Whilst we are keen to ensure all our priorities are well represented by the University Research Programme, it is the quality of the proposal and team, likelihood of delivery and overall benefit to Toka Tū Ake EQC and New Zealand that will be the basis for our decisions.
- We encourage applicants to carefully consider the Research Investment Priorities Statement 2021-23 when selecting their choices of investment priorities, along with how they will deliver benefits on those priorities.

5. What are the main differences between biennial and URP funding?

- Biennial funding supports a single defined project or pilot, for up to 2 years, valued up to $100K in total. Early-career researchers are strongly encouraged to apply to this fund. Whilst capability development is a benefit, it is not the focus of this funding round.
- URP funding is focussed on capability development through a research programme (usually made up of several related projects), for up to 3 years, and up to $450K. It supports experienced researchers who can demonstrate prior capability development, who have delivered benefits from a number of funded projects and have prior experience supervising students and managing a team.

6. Is the role of PI or programme topic more important for current URP holders applying for continued funding in the 2024-26 round?

- Both are important. Please note:
    - If the programme is changing significantly, then a new EoI should be submitted to the URP 2024-26 Round.
    - If the new URP's research focus is remaining largely unchanged from its original URP 2020-23 format, then the PI is required to submit their EoI noting this intention for a continuation to their current URP. They will then be invited to proceed directly to a full proposal application when it opens on 20 January 2023. This arrangement also applies when the URP's research programme is remaining unchanged, but the PI is changing. The full proposal is where the rationale for the change in PI needs to be provided, along with the University's approach to this URP's PI handover, the experience of the new PI and any other expected changes with the new PI.

7. Timeline of the URP
- This information is required in the Full Proposal only, not the EOI. A Gantt chart is a helpful way of demonstrating your timeline.