



**CATALYST
FUND**
LEADERS

Catalyst: Leaders

Ngā Aratohu Guidelines

Hōngongoi July2025



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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Note

- Please note that this document will be released three times a year:
Kohi-tātea January, Paenga-whāwhā April and Hōngongoi July.
- Information on open programmes is updated at each call release.
- Application Templates are available for downloading via the Catalyst: Portal,
please contact your Research Office for a URL Link to the Catalyst: Portal.

Hitori Putanga Version History

Version	Date	Change	Page
24.0	January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Catalyst Fund investment plan released in December 2024, identifies six priority research areas for the Fund. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantum technology Health and biomedicine Biotechnologies Artificial Intelligence Antarctic research Space and Earth observations 	Page 10
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to the number and quality of submitted applications, proposals aligning with the Catalyst Fund priority research areas are expected to make up 75% of awarded Catalyst: Leaders contracts unless otherwise noted in the specific programme requirement for each sub-programme. The remaining 25% of awarded contracts can be in any field of research including social sciences and the humanities. 	Page 10
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Criterion 3 has been amended to further reward proposals that articulate a clear line of sight to expected benefits of national and global significance in line with New Zealand's science priorities, and which initiate link with relevant New Zealand research capabilities to facilitate research/knowledge transfer. 	Page 16-17
24.1	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science 17th HOPE Meeting 	Page 22

He Whakamārama Background

International science and innovation connectivity provides an opportunity to drive increasing excellence and the potential for impact of New Zealand science.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) Catalyst Fund supports activities that initiate, develop and foster collaborations leveraging international science and innovation for New Zealand's benefit. The Catalyst Fund is delivered through four instruments: Influence, Leaders, Seeding and Strategic.

On behalf of MBIE, Royal Society Te Apārangi (the Society) administers Catalyst: Leaders.

Ngā Whāinga Objectives

Catalyst: Leaders supports incoming and outgoing targeted international fellowships for exceptional individuals that cannot be supported through other means.

The objectives of Catalyst: Leaders

- Promote the importance of international cooperation in science and New Zealand's science and innovation capabilities.
- Catalyse science and innovation through placement of international experts in key science and innovation hubs.
- Meet specific capability needs for New Zealand benefit.

Two Catalyst: Leaders calls will take place throughout this year.

Catalyst: Leaders programmes open (July 2025)

- Japan Society for the Promotion of Science 17th HOPE Meeting

Whakapā mai Contact

For any queries, please contact Royal Society Te Apārangi:

Research Funding (International)

Royal Society Te Apārangi

PO Box 598 | 11 Turnbull Street, Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Phone: +64 4 470 5756 | +64 4 470 5764

Email: International.Applications@royalsociety.org.nz

Ngā Whai Wāhitanga Tuku Pūtea Funding Opportunities

Catalyst: Leaders provides funding for a number of pre-existing and new sub-programmes. An overview of included sub-programmes and key dates are given in the tables below:

TABLE 1: Annual Call timeline

Call	Open Date	Close Date	Sub-Programmes
January	13 February 2025	17 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Leader Fellowship• JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship• New Zealand to China Scientist Exchange Programme• Julius von Haast Fellowship
April	NA	NA	There is no Catalyst Leaders call for April 2025.
July	24 July 2025	16 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• JSPS 17th HOPE Meeting

Please note: Information on sub-programmes is updated at each call release.

TABLE 2: Catalyst: Leaders Sub-Programmes

Sub-Programme	Brief Description	Duration	NZ\$ Funding (excl. GST)	Awards available per call
International Leader Fellowships*	Supports exceptional individuals from any country outside New Zealand to catalyse science and innovation capability and capacity in New Zealand for a minimum of 4 weeks per year for up to 3 years	1 to 3 years	Per annum: \$20,000 Salary support \$20,000 Research support \$10,000 Host admin	Up to 3
Julius von Haast Fellowship Award	Supports an internationally recognised researcher from Germany to undertake research in New Zealand for a minimum of 4 weeks per year	3 years	Per annum: \$20,000 Salary support \$20,000 Research support \$10,000 Host admin	Up to 1
New Zealand to China Scientist Exchange Programme**	Supports the development of research linkages with China by enabling New Zealand researchers to visit Chinese research organisations	4 weeks	Flights and daily living allowance	Up to 10
JSPS HOPE Meeting	Supports excellent PhD students and/or young researchers to attend the HOPE Meetings with Nobel Laureates in Japan	5 days	Flights, accommodation, and meeting registration	Up to 5
JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship***	Supports young and excellent New Zealand postdoctoral researchers doing research in Japan	12 – 24 months	Flights, insurance and living allowance	Up to 4

* Catalyst Fund priority research areas apply.

** New Zealand-China Scientist Exchange Programme priority research areas apply.

*** Please note this programme is fully funded by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

TABLE 3: Catalyst: Leaders Sub-Programmes administered by other parties

Sub-Programme	Brief Description	Duration and approximate timing	International Partner Agency
China to New Zealand Scientist Exchange Programme (for Chinese researchers visiting New Zealand)	Supports the development of research linkages with China by enabling Chinese researchers to visit New Zealand research organisations	4-6 weeks, October-November (TBC)	Chinese Science and Technology Exchange Center in Beijing (CSTEC)

Please note: The Society does not administer Table 3 Sub-Programme calls. All eligibility and application requirements are determined by the International Partner Agency.

Ngā Whakamāramatanga Hira Key Definitions

Applicant means the New Zealand research organisation submitting the Catalyst Proposal on behalf of the Leader or Principal Investigator (PI).

Call means the request for proposals towards specific Programmes or Sub-Programmes, as outlined in *Table 1: Annual Call* timeline.

New Zealand Principal Investigator (PI) means the New Zealand individual nominated by the Applicant, who is responsible for the proposed activity if awarded funding.

Collaboration Partner means the international researcher (and New Zealand researcher(s) from organisations other than the Applicant organisation if applicable) collaborating with the Principal Investigator.

International researcher means an overseas-based researcher who is not employed by a New Zealand research organisation(s).

Host means the New Zealand or international research organisation that will be hosting the Leader or Principal Investigator (PI).

Leader or Fellow means the travelling individual researcher nominated by the Applicant, who would carry out the proposed activity if awarded funding. *For Leaders coming to New Zealand, the Leader is the International Collaboration Partner. For New Zealand Leaders travelling abroad, the Leader is the Principal Investigator (PI).*

Partner Institution means the international research organisation (and New Zealand organisation other than the Applicant organisation if applicable) of the Collaboration Partner.

Programme (or Sub-Programme) means the individual funding opportunity within Catalyst: Leaders, identified in *Table 2: Catalyst: Leaders Sub-Programmes*.

Project means the unique research collaboration proposed by the Proposal.

Project Team means the Principal Investigator, Collaboration Partner and supporting individuals collectively identified in the Proposal as critical to the success of the Project.

Proposal (or Application) means the application submitted by the Applicant to Catalyst: Leaders.

Research Organisation means an organisation that has internal capability to carry out substantive research, science, technology or related activities. Public service departments as listed in Schedule 1 of the State Sector Act 1988 are not eligible to apply under the Catalyst Fund.

Whakakape Disclaimer

All Programmes are subject to Budget decisions, no particular level of funding is guaranteed and all commitments made or implied in the guidelines are subject to suitable appropriations being made by the New Zealand Government and, where applicable, bilateral partner Governments.

Ngā Whakaritenga Āheinga Eligibility Requirements

- The Proposal must be made by a New Zealand-based research organisation or a New Zealand-based legal entity representing a research organisation, unless otherwise agreed by the Society.
- Complete Proposals including all supporting documents, must be submitted by **12.00 Noon (NZST)** on the closing date indicated on *Table 1: Annual Call timeline*. No late Proposals or supplementary documentation will be accepted.
- International Leaders coming to New Zealand must not already hold employment in New Zealand.
- In addition to meeting the general eligibility requirements, the Proposal must meet all **specific Sub-Programme eligibility** criteria, listed in the Information on open programmes section at the end of these guidelines.
- The Project must not benefit a Russian state institution (including but not limited to support for Russian military or security activity) or an organisation outside government that may be perceived as contributing to the war effort.
<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/about/news/new-eligibility-criteria-restricts-science-research-funding-that-could-contribute-to-russias-war-effort/>

He Aratohu Tono Application Guidance

ORCID

Each named investigator can add or create an ORCID ID in the "People" section of the Catalyst: Portal. ORCID IDs are encouraged but are not mandatory. Please click on the "Create or Connect your ORCID ID" button on the top right of the "Contact Details" section and follow instructions.

Refer to **section 1** of the Application.

Fields of Research

Priority research area

The Catalyst Fund investment plan released in December 2024, identifies six priority research areas for the Fund. These are:

- Quantum technology
- Health and biomedicine
- Biotechnologies
- Artificial Intelligence
- Antarctic research
- Space and Earth observations

Subject to the number and quality of submitted applications, proposals aligning with the Catalyst Fund priority research areas are expected to make up 75% of awarded Catalyst: Leaders contracts unless otherwise noted in the specific programme requirement for each sub-programme. The remaining 25% of awarded contracts can be in any field of research (including social sciences and the humanities). Refer to section 4 of the Application.

Please tick the priority research area(s) applying to the proposed research. If none of the priority research areas applies, select 'Other'.

Alignment with priority research areas must be easily recognizable from the project description as well. If this is not the case, panellists may assess a proposal as “not aligned with a priority research area”.

Eligibility or priority fields of **research** are listed by Sub-Programme in the specific programme requirements at the end of these guidelines.

Refer to **section 4** of the Application.

FOR and SEO codes

As part of the Society's obligations under New Zealand Research Information System (NZRIS), the Society is required to report the share of each Field or Research (FOR) and Socio-Economic Classification (SEO) codes to the proposed research, and the type of Research Activity.

Please additionally indicate the % share of each FOR and SEO code to the proposed research. The shares should add up to 100%.

Refer to **section 4** of the Application.

Type of Research Activity

The default Research Activity setting on the portal for each proposal is “Basic” and set to 100%. This can be changed if required. If no change is required, no action is needed.

The four activities are:

- **Pure basic research:** Basic research carried out for the advancement of knowledge, without seeking long-term economic or social benefits or making any effort to apply the results to practical problems or to transfer the results to sectors responsible for their application.
- **Strategic basic research:** Experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge directed into specified broad areas in the expectation of practical discoveries. It provides the broad base of knowledge necessary for the solution of recognised practical problems.
- **Applied research:** Original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge. It is, however, directed primarily towards a specific, practical aim or objective.
- **Experimental research:** Systematic work, drawing on knowledge gained from research and practical experience and producing additional knowledge, which is directed to producing new products or processes or to improving existing products or processes.

Refer to **section 4** of the Application.

Vision Mātauranga

[Vision Mātauranga](#) is a policy about innovation, opportunity and the creation of knowledge that highlights the potential contribution of Māori knowledge, resources and people.

Applicants should identify which, if any, of the four Vision Mātauranga themes below are associated with the proposed research. A Vision Mātauranga statement must be included for all research that has relevance for Māori. If this is not applicable to your proposed research, you must tick N/A AND provide a rationale for why this is. Where Vision Mātauranga is appropriate to a proposal, it can contribute to the assessment of its overall excellence.

The four themes are:

- **Indigenous Innovation**, which involves contributing to economic growth through distinctive research and development.
- **Taiao**, which is concerned with achieving environmental sustainability through iwi and hapū relationships with land and sea.
- **Hauora/Oranga**, which centres around improving health and social wellbeing.
- **Mātauranga**, which involves exploring indigenous knowledge.

Collection of the % contribution of each Vision Mātauranga theme to the proposed research is part of the Society's NZRIS reporting requirement. If you have ticked one or more Vision Mātauranga themes, please consider each theme one at a time. Indicate the proportion of the proposed research that aligns with that theme. Note that it is possible for the combined total

to be over 100% (for example, if the proposed research is entirely Mātauranga and also has a Hauora/Oranga theme, the contributions could be 100% and 10% respectively).

Refer to **section 6** of the Application.

How do I decide whether to include a Vision Mātauranga statement in my proposal?

The five ways of conceptualising Vision Mātauranga in your research (see below) may help you decide if this applies to your project. The categories have been adapted from those on the National Science Challenge, Biological Heritage website <https://bioheritage.nz/about-us/vision-matauranga/> hosted by Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research. Please note, however, that these categories are fluid. There may well be overlap between them as in categories b and c in terms of the nature and degree of relevance to Māori, and not every point in each category need apply. The original categories were set out by MBIE in information for the Endeavour Fund c. 2015.

Ways of conceptualising Vision Mātauranga in your research

a. Research with no specific Māori component

- No mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) is used.
- Māori are not associated with the research process (for example, not on any research management/advisory/governance panels, it is not inclusive of Māori land or institutions, nor the subject of any component of the research).
- Work is not likely to be of greater direct relevance to Māori than members of any other group.

b. Research specifically relevant to Māori

- There is specific relevance to Māori.
- Mātauranga Māori may be used in a minor way to guide the work and its relevance to Māori.
- It includes work that contributes to Māori aspirations and outcomes.

c. Research involving Māori

- Mātauranga Māori may be incorporated in the project but is not central to the project.
- Research is specifically and directly relevant to Māori and Māori are involved in the design and/or undertaking of the research.
- The work typically contributes to Māori (for example, iwi, hapū, organisations) aspirations and outcomes.

d. Māori-centred research

- The project is Māori-led, and where mātauranga Māori is used alongside other knowledges (for example, through frameworks, models, methods, tools, etc.).
- Kaupapa Māori research is a key focus of the project.
- Research is typically collaborative or consultative, with direct input from Māori stakeholders.
- There is alignment with and contribution to Māori (for example, iwi, hapū, organisations) aspirations.

e. Kaupapa Māori research

- Mātauranga Māori is incorporated, used and understood, as a central focus of the project and its findings.
- Research is grounded in te ao Māori and connected to Māori philosophies and principles.
- Research typically uses kaupapa Māori research methodologies.
- Te reo Māori may be a central feature to this kaupapa or research activity, and the applicant has medium to high cultural fluency or knowledge of tikanga and reo.
- The research is generally led by a Māori researcher; non-Indigenous researchers may carry out research under the guidance/mentoring of a Māori researcher.
- Māori participation (iwi/hapū/marae/individual) is high.
- The work contributes strongly to Māori (for example, iwi, hapū, organisations) aspirations and outcomes and is mana enhancing.

Developing a Vision Mātauranga statement

It is important to keep in mind that there is no single approach or prescription for Vision Mātauranga: one size does not fit all and there are many possible ways of addressing Vision Mātauranga. Vision Mātauranga should not, however, be seen as an add-on, nor should it be treated as separate from the research, methods or people involved in the project. A holistic approach that considers reciprocity and relationships is therefore desirable.

Vision Mātauranga does not begin and end with your Vision Mātauranga statement. You should demonstrate applicable actions and relationships throughout the research. The following questions may be useful to consider when conceptualising and writing your project:

- Have you co-created the research topic/issue with an iwi or Māori organisation?
- What does working in partnership with iwi mean to you as a researcher?

- To what extent have you discussed the research with Māori stakeholders and agreed on the methodology you will use?
- Was there full disclosure and informed consent to the proposed research with Māori stakeholders? How has that agreement/informed consent been agreed to?
- What provisions have you made to ensure there is appropriate technology transfer to Māori stakeholders as the research proceeds and as findings become available towards the end of the project?
- Are there benefits to Māori? What are they?
- How will you share the research outcomes with Māori?
- Is there a Tiriti o Waitangi component or requirement in your research?
- Is the research mana enhancing?

Vision Mātauranga Resources

Below you will find a non-exhaustive list of published resources that describe, discuss, and talk about how researchers have engaged with Vision Mātauranga and kaupapa Māori research. These range from early conceptions of Vision Mātauranga to more recent frameworks. The resources underscore the diverse ways Vision Mātauranga may be approached across disciplines and methodologies.

- Allen, W., Jamie M. Ataria, J. M., Apgar, J. M., Harmsworth, G., and Tremblay, L. A. (2009). Kia pono te mahi putaiao—doing science in the right spirit. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 39:4, 239-242. DOI: 10.1080/03014220909510588
- Crawford, S. (2009). Mātauranga Māori and western science: The importance of hypotheses, predictions and protocols, *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 39:4, 163-166. DOI: 10.1080/03014220909510571
- Broughton, D. (Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Taranaki, Ngāti Porou, Ngāpuhi), and McBreen, K. (Waitaha, Kāti Māmoe, Ngāi Tahu). (2015). Mātauranga Māori, tino rangatiratanga and the future of New Zealand science. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 45:2, 83-88. DOI: 10.1080/03036758.2015.1011171
- Kana, F. and Tamatea, K. (2006). Sharing, listening, learning and developing understandings of Kaupapa Māori research by engaging with two Māori communities involved in education. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 12, 9-20.
<https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/6198/Kana%20Sharin%20g.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>
- Macfarlane, S., Macfarlane, A. and Gillon, G. (2015) Sharing the food baskets of knowledge: Creating space for a blending of streams. In A. Macfarlane, S. Macfarlane, M.

Webber, (eds.), Sociocultural realities: Exploring new horizons. Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 52-67.

- Moewaka Barnes, H. (2006). Transforming Science: How our Structures Limit Innovation. Social Policy Journal of New Zealand Te Puna Whakaaro, 29, 1-16.
<https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/journals-and-magazines/social-policy-journal/spj29/29-pages-1-16.pdf>
- Pihama, L., Tiakiwai, S.-J., and Southey, K. (eds.). (2015). Kaupapa rangahau: A reader. A collection of readings from the Kaupapa Rangahau workshops series. (2nd ed.). Hamilton, New Zealand: Te Kotahi Research Institute.
<https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/11738/Kaupapa%20Rangahau%20-%20A%20Reader%202nd%20Edition.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y>
- Smith, L. T., Maxwell, T. K., Puke, H., and Temara, P. (2016). Indigenous knowledge, methodology and mayhem: What is the role of methodology in producing indigenous insights? A discussion from Mātauranga Māori. Knowledge Cultures, 4(3), 131–156.
<https://addletonacademicpublishers.com/component/content/article?id=2834:feature-article-indigenous-knowledge-methodology-and-mayhem-what-is-the-role-of-methodology-in-producing-indigenous-insights-a-discussion-from-matauranga-maori>

Applying in Te Reo Māori

If applicants wish to complete some, or all, sections of their proposal in te reo Māori, they are able to do so. However, because some of the panelists who will be assessing their proposal will not be fluent in te reo Māori, an English translation of the section(s) will be necessary. Applicants, therefore, are able to provide a translation for those sections as supplementary material over and above the page limits set for the relevant section of the proposal. Applicants must still keep to the set page limits for the “official” proposal, but can use additional pages for the translation. The portal at present will not allow additional documents or pages, so the Society asks that anyone who is providing a translation sends it by email to International.Applications@royalsociety.org.nz by the application closing time. If an applicant chooses not to provide a translation, then the Society will arrange for a translation to be made by one of the third-party translation services that it uses for its own publications. Please note that because this will be carried out by a third-party service, the Society will not be able to guarantee the accuracy of the translation.

Paearu mō te Tipako Selection Criteria

The assessment of Proposals by the Society will be through a review process involving assessment panel(s) from outside of the Society. Refer to the section on application assessment for more information. *Please also refer to each Sub-Programme – Specific Requirements.* The review process will consider the proposals against the following assessment criteria:

Criterion 1: Enduring collaboration (weight in assessment 30%)

Will the proposed activity establish an enduring collaboration with world class international partners?

- Track record of the Leader (relative to opportunity).
- Potential for building the scale of partnership from initial engagement to a substantive and enduring collaboration.
- Ability of the Host and the Leader to deliver on proposed activities.
- Ability of the Leader to be a catalyst for capability and capacity building in New Zealand.
- Ability of the Host to maximise the opportunity of the Leader's visit (where the Leader is a visiting international researcher).
- Clearly demonstrated excellence of the international Partner Institution (where the Leader is an outgoing New Zealander).

Refer to **section 9** of the Application.

Criterion 2: Novel knowledge and partnership (weight in assessment 40%)

Will the activity lead to the creation of new knowledge and a novel research partnership?

- How the Collaboration Partner will bring world-leading knowledge that complements the expertise of New Zealand Principal Investigator and the New Zealand Host.
- How the proposed collaboration will support a new partnership or a new research focus for an established collaboration.

Refer to **section 10** of the Application.

Criterion 3: Strategic Benefits (weight in assessment 30%)

Will the activity lead to a collaboration of strategic benefit to New Zealand?

- Clearly articulated line of sight to expected benefits of national and global significance in

line with New Zealand's science priorities.

- Ability to leverage international investment, and access to facilities and infrastructure not available in New Zealand.
- Ability of the Host to use the partnership to initiate links with relevant New Zealand capabilities for the creating of additional benefits.
- Ability of the Host to leverage strategic benefit of the Leader to catalyse capability and capacity development in New Zealand (where the Leader is a visiting international researcher),

Refer to **section 11** of the Application.

When assessing the Proposals against the assessment criteria, the assessment panel(s) may also take the following factors into account, including the extent to which the overall mix of investments:

- is likely to achieve the objectives of the Catalyst: Leaders
- is likely to unlock the science and innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources, and people for the benefit of New Zealand in accordance with the aim of the Vision Mātauranga policy (see previous section)

Other Funding sources.

Applicants are required to identify all other funding sources. The activity must not previously have been funded from another source. It must not form an integral part of an MBIE, Marsden Fund, or Health Research Council-funded project.

Refer to **Budget** section of the Application.

Tukanga Tono Application Process

Make sure that you are familiar with any specific Sub-Programme requirements (for example, priority research areas, eligibility requirements, bilateral Partner applications, etc.), which are outlined under the relevant Information on Open Programmes at the end of these guidelines. See also under the application assessment section.

Submitting Your Application

All Proposals must be submitted on the Catalyst: Portal. A link to the Catalyst: Portal will be made available through your research office. Please contact the Society if your organisation has not received a link by using the email address below:

- International.Applications@royalsociety.org.nz

For additional help on how to use the Catalyst: Portal and fill out your application, please refer

to the Catalyst: Portal Instructions available for download via the Catalyst: Portal. Receipt of all Applications will be acknowledged by email. Information provided by Applicants will be administered in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act 2020.

Application Format

Please follow the instructions provided on the application template(s), keeping to the space requirements.

- Proposals and any supporting documents submitted to the Society must be typed in English, unless prior approval by the Society has been granted.
- Applications must be fully self-supporting.
- Digital signatures are accepted.
- Cited references may be included as part of the application form(s) in the relevant sections. These can be inserted wherever appropriate as referenced footnotes (reduced to font size 10 if necessary), but please be aware the page limit does still apply.

Supporting Documents Required

- Letter of support from New Zealand institution.
- CVs of the Principal Investigator and the Collaboration Partner (not applicable to HOPE Meeting and JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship applications) (New Zealand RS&T CV template sections 1 to 2b, including a list of previous grants and outcome of these). Please highlight in yellow a maximum of five publications with the highest relevance to the proposed project under section 2a.
- New Zealand Host declaration (including statement agreeing to commit staff time and other resources to the project).
- Letter of support from the overseas Partner Institution(s) agreeing to commit staff time and other resources to the project (not applicable to HOPE Meeting applications).
- Budget, including co-funding/in kind support (not applicable to HOPE Meeting and JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship applications).

Te Tātari i Ngā Tono Assessment of Applications

The Society will appoint an independent assessment panel(s), which will review all eligible Proposals for each Sub-Programme separately.

The final decision on what proposals will be funded lies with the Society. In making its decisions, the Society will take into account recommendations made by the assessment panel.

The Society may also take into account the total investment across Catalyst: Leaders to ensure it is a balanced portfolio across both research fields and country relationships supported, while still ensuring quality.

This means, for example, ensuring that:

- the Society is not over-investing in collaborations with one country or topic area to the neglect of others
- funding is not disproportionately invested in either research with short-term impact horizon versus research with a long-term impact horizon
- joint decision making with bilateral Partners is enabled.
- subject to the number and quality of submitted applications, proposals aligning with the Catalyst Fund priority research areas make up 75% of awarded Catalyst: Leaders contracts where applicable. The remaining 25% of awarded contracts can be in any field of research (including social sciences and the humanities).

Please note that panel members are drawn from across the New Zealand research community, and Applicants are therefore advised to write Proposals to a research literate audience.

Panelists will represent appropriate disciplines and sectors. The Society recommends that Applicants write in plain English and avoid using jargon, as panelists from outside the Proposal subject specialty will inevitably also be reviewing their Proposal. All applications should be written in a clear, concise manner with sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to appraise fully the scope and implications of the Proposal.

MBIE reserves the right to nominate one assessment panel member.

The panel(s) will score and rank Proposals within each Sub-Programme pool in accordance with the published selection criteria above.

The funding decision is final and is not open to discussion or appeal. However, a decision not to fund does not preclude a re-application in a later round.

For more information on the review of Catalyst Leaders applications, including guidelines for Catalyst Leaders Reviewers, please visit <https://www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/catalyst-fund/reviewing-proposals/>.

Whakamōhiotanga Notification

The Society expects to notify Applicants of the outcome of their Proposal by email through the institutional Research Coordinator.

For more information on the expected notification timeframes, refer to the individual Programme requirements at the end of these guidelines.

The successful Applicant will have one month from the date of notification in which

to accept the award, following which the offer will be withdrawn.

Feedback

Because of the large number of Proposals received, the Society is not able to provide specific feedback to Applicants about individual Proposals.

Ngā Takuhe i Waimarie Successful Grants

Conditions of Contract

In making its investment decisions, the Society may also:

- set pre-contract conditions which must be met before the investment is contracted
- set special conditions in addition to the general terms and conditions set out in these guidelines
- assess the appropriateness of the budget submitted with the proposal
- ensure that the appropriate ethics approval has been given for specific collaborative Projects involving research on animals or humans.

The contract will specify that:

- references to the Project (including publications) acknowledge the provision of funding using the phrase: “Catalyst: Leaders funding is provided by the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and administered by Royal Society Te Apārangi” or similar wording
- the Society will require a report on the agreed activity from the Applicant
- the report may be made available to the public or otherwise as the Society sees fit unless otherwise specified by the Applicant
- all other funding sources relating to the activity have been identified
- the Society retains the right to audit expenditure and the outputs produced by the funded activity; and in the event that a dispute cannot be resolved, the parties agree to submit the matter for resolution to a mutually agreed neutral party whose decision shall be final and binding.

Contract Timeframes

Please refer to timeframes for each Sub-Programme in the relevant specific programme requirements at the end of these guidelines.

Reporting

Annual activity reports must be submitted to the Society by the New Zealand Research Organisation, with the final report due one month after the completion of the project. The reports must account for the progress made on the annual milestone activities identified in the proposal, and must be submitted on the template available on the Society website. Payment may be dependent on the report meeting the quality criteria identified in the Conditions of Contract. The quality criteria include submission of the report(s) by the specified date, clarity of the report, and proof that the activity has achieved the contracted deliverables and met the objectives of the Programme.

- The reporting requirements template is available for downloading at:
<https://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/catalyst-fund/information-for-catalyst-grant-recipients/contract-reporting/>
- Activity Reports are to be submitted via email to Royal Society Te Apārangi Research Funding (International) team at:
International.Applications@royalsociety.org.nz

All Activity Reports provided to the Society may be shared with MBIE and bilateral partners, where relevant.

Variations

Contract variations (including change of personnel, extensions, etc.) will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. For more information, go to <https://www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/catalyst-fund/information-for-catalyst-grant-recipients/contracting-and-variations/>

Requests must be addressed to the Director – Research Funding, sent from the institutional Research Coordinator, justified in writing and are subject to approval by the Society.

Information on Open Programmes

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science –17th HOPE Meeting [OPEN]

Ngā Whakaritenga Tauwhāiti o te Kaupapa

Specific Sub-Programme requirements

Background

Under the auspices of the New Zealand-Japan Bilateral Programme between the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the Royal Society Te Apārangi administers the nomination of up to five young researchers to attend the HOPE Meeting in Japan.

Objective

HOPE Meetings give opportunities to excellent graduate students selected from countries and areas in the Asia-Pacific and Africa region to engage in interdisciplinary discussions with Nobel Laureates and other distinguished scientists pioneering the frontiers of knowledge. It is hoped that the experience the students gain at the meeting will inspire and motivate them to become excellent scientists able to shoulder the future of science and technology in the region.

The title “HOPE” signifies the promise held for young scientists and optimism for a bright science and technology future in the Asia-Pacific and Africa region.

International Partner

Japan – Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)

Activity Description

The 17th HOPE Meeting will be held from Monday 2 March to Friday 6 March 2026 in Tsukuba-city, Japan.

The participants will comprise about 20 PhD students and young researchers from the institutions in Japan and 90 will be nominated by the Overseas Cooperating Institutions of the Asia-Pacific and Africa region; [tentative]: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam.

Royal Society Te Apārangi can nominate up to five excellent PhD students and/or young postdoc researchers for the 2026 HOPE Meeting.

Programme of the HOPE Meeting

The programme is expected to feature the following:

- Lectures by Nobel Laureates, distinguished researchers and cultural authorities
- Small group discussions with the lecturers (seminar style)
- Poster session including one-minute oral presentation by each participant
- Oral presentations by multinational participant teams of participants
- Cultural experience programme
- Excursion (research facilities and cultural heritage sites)

* Please note that HOPE Meetings are like intellectual short-term intensive camps. In that sense, it is quite different from a normal scientific conference

Date and Venue

Monday 2 March to Thursday 6 March 2026, Tsukuba-city, Japan.

**Hotel check-in / Registration Sunday 1 March*

** Hotel check-out Saturday 7 March*

Fields of Research

Proposals received under this activity must fall under one of the eligible research fields:

- Physics
- Chemistry
- Physiology/Medicine
- Or related fields

Specific Requirements

In addition to the general eligibility requirements of Catalyst: Leaders, the young researcher applying must:

- be a PhD student or young researcher (receiving their PhDs after 2 April 2020) *) with a record of excellent academic performance
- *Past 5 years excluding periods of maternity/paternity, and childcare leave.
- be able to participate in the entire Meeting programme from 2-6 March
- possess ample English proficiency to do so

- have an excellent record of research and a high interest in the societal influence of scientific knowledge and its application
- complete the JSPS HOPE Application Form (application form and JSPS instructions on how to fill out the form are available on the Catalyst: Portal)
- not have been selected to participate in any past HOPE Meetings

It is furthermore expected that HOPE Meeting participants have a strong desire to participate actively in the meeting exchanges and discussions, have a strong interest in a wide scope of science and research and will initiate joint research and/or build collegial networks in the future.

Participants are obliged to submit all required documents, including abstracts for poster presentations, and meeting reports to JSPS. Attendance at all components of the Meeting is also mandatory.

JSPS does not recommend traveling with accompanying persons (e.g., family members). As each day's program will stretch uninterruptedly over the full day from morning to night, non-participants will not be allowed to attend the meeting programs.

Supporting documents

In addition to the JSPS HOPE Application Form, a letter of support and a declaration must be uploaded to the Catalyst: Portal (an additional CV and a letter of support from the overseas partner institution is not required).

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science HOPE website

<https://www.jps.go.jp/english/e-hope/index.html>

Assessment of HOPE Applications

When assessing HOPE applications, the Society appointed assessment panel will be asked to be cognisant of the Catalyst: Leaders assessment criteria, but rank the applications based on the Pls' Track record relative to opportunity, motivation for participating in the HOPE Meeting, and the applications' "strategic benefits" to New Zealand.

The final decision on what proposals will be nominated to JSPS lies with the Society. In making its decisions, the Society will take into account recommendations made by the assessment panel. The Society may also take into account the spread of research fields and Institutional representation across the nominated applications as instructed by JSPS.

Nominations

Please note: for all JSPS schemes in the Catalyst: Leaders scheme the Society is the Nominating Authority, with all nominated researchers subject to final approval by JSPS.

Notification

The timeline for notification is expected to occur in early December.

Successful Grants

Expected Timeframes

Nomination Finalised	Required Starting Date	Contracted Activity must be complete	Activity Report(s) required
December 2025	HOPE Meeting scheduled for Monday 2 March to Friday 6 March 2026	The conclusion of the HOPE Meeting	One month after Meeting attendance

Reporting

Successful researchers are required to submit a report of their visit no later than 30 days after returning to New Zealand. The reports will be made available to both JSPS and MBIE.



Research Funding (International)

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