

Frequently Asked Questions



Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori

What is the purpose of the Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori?

The Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori seeks to acknowledge that the genesis for play in Aotearoa stems from a Te Ao Māori worldview through intentional and targeted investment in tākaro Māori organisations and providers already demonstrating tākaro Māori leadership.

The Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori is a four-year guided investment journey for organisations and providers already focusing upon the area of tākaro Māori. The project will strengthen, and then expand, the existing tākaro Māori workforce across Aotearoa and provide a curriculum of content that aims to support their ongoing development. As a result of capability and capacity building, we wish to see enhancement to the tākaro Māori system and the ongoing enablement of the restoration, reclamation, and revitalisation of tākaro Māori nationwide. The long-term goal and aspiration for this work is to increase the level of physical activity for tamariki and their whānau through playing 'as Maori'¹.

The project aims to:

- Establish Cohort One, an initial group of 4-5 leading tākaro Māori providers who will receive three-year investment
- Foster strategic leadership within the existing tākaro Māori system to guide the future development of tākaro Māori across Aotearoa
- Ensure Māori, as tangata whenua, are included at the earliest possible opportunity and are empowered to create space for success to be achieved 'as Māori'
- Strengthen Tākaro Māori organisational capacity and capability through resourcing, cross-system collaboration, and wānanga
- Identify the Learning and Development (L&D) needs of the national tākaro Māori system
- Facilitate the delivery of L&D opportunities for the tākaro Māori workforce.

What is tākaro Māori?

Tākaro Māori is one of the many different terms used to refer to traditional Māori games, activities, and play. As with many other regionally distinct mātauranga, it is not a universally accepted term² however, this is the framing adopted by Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa within the Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori.

Tākaro in the context of the Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori is understood to encompass a diverse range of physical, mental, and social experiences deeply rooted in Te Ao Māori philosophies and ways of living. These practices and traditions, as taonga tuku iho (treasures handed down), not only promote physical wellbeing but also strengthen cultural identity, spirituality, and intergenerational knowledge transmission.

However, within the context of this project and its position within existing Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa strategies, the physical activity manifestations of tākaro Māori are emphasised.

¹ In this setting 'as Māori' can be understood as being the same as the innermost dimension of Te Whetū Rehua - [te-whetu-rehua.pdf \(sportnz.org.nz\)](https://www.sportnz.org.nz)

² Other related terms include but are not limited to: hīanga, hākinakina, mahi a rēhia, purei.

What is this investment focusing on?

The Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori will see Sport NZ investment of approximately \$4m over three years to strengthen national infrastructure to support tākaro Māori.

This project will develop the capability and capacity of the tākaro Māori system. To help ensure existing leaders within the tākaro Māori sector are recognised for their contributions to this kaupapa, the EOI process will identify and support eligible organisations and/or providers capable of engaging in strategic level discussions relating to the future direction of tākaro Māori within Aotearoa.

The project will include establishing tākaro Māori workforce roles, with the first cohort tasked with shaping the kaupapa, co-design what the future tākaro roles will be, and develop the L&D needed to build the capability of a tākaro sector.

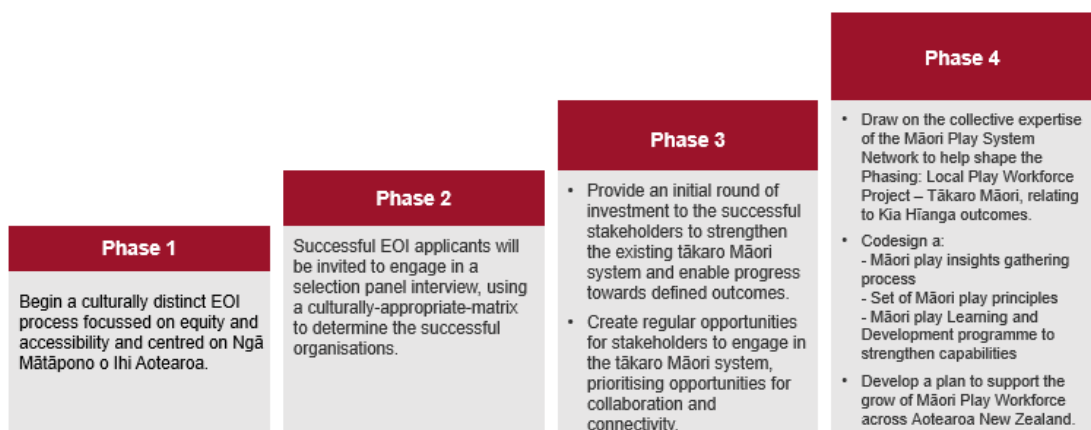
What is the project plan?

The project will invest in three cohorts of tākaro Māori workforce roles over a four-year period. The first cohort will have a strategic focus and comprise of a group of four to five tākaro Māori organisations and/or providers. The second and third cohorts will be an expansion of the workforce and will begin once the first cohort has undertaken the necessary foundational work to strengthen the tākaro Māori system. The second cohort is estimated to start on 1 July 2024.

All cohorts will be funded for three years.

The project will be phased – what will the phases look like?

Phasing: Local Play Workforce Project – Tākaro Māori



How many roles will be appointed?

Up to 15 new roles will be appointed in three cohorts to be established over three years:

- Cohort One: Five workforce roles with a strategic focus likely in place by 1 December 2023

- Cohort Two: Five workforce roles, likely in place by 1 July 2024
- Cohort Three: Five workforce roles (in place based on progress of first two cohorts.)

What is the role of Cohort One?

Cohort One will support the intent of Ihi Aotearoa to enable the restoration, reclamation, and revitalisation of tākarō Māori. It will focus on *strengthening* and *supporting* tākarō providers to meet the following tangata whenua outcomes of Kia Hīanga:

- Undertake a co-design journey that shapes Takaro Maori Insights, Principles and Learning and Development to support the growth of the developing workforce. This includes regular connectivity.
- Increase Māori play leadership and management within Sport NZ and across our investment partner organisations.
- Enable tangata whenua to identify Māori outcomes of relevance to the tākarō Māori system.
- Support the upcoming review of Kia Hīanga.

Achieving these outcomes will strengthen the national tākarō Māori system to then enable future cohorts the opportunity to benefit from a system possessing greater stability and sustainability.

How will future stakeholders be chosen?

Sport NZ has committed to implementing this project at scale across Aotearoa New Zealand and is aiming to honour its Mana Ōrite (partnership) and Mana Taurite (equity) obligations under te Tiriti o Waitangi. This means iwi- and Māori-led organisations, or organisations with strong connections to mana whenua working in the tākarō Māori space will be target groups for investment. At the same time, Sport NZ wants to ensure the project adds value to the existing tākarō Māori system by celebrating those who are already leading the way by opening investment opportunities to new organisations.

To determine suitability for investment, Sport NZ will work through a culturally distinct process with multiple phases that have been designed around existing internal Te Ao Māori frameworks (Māui Hīanga, Te Whetū Rehua) to assist in the identification of potential future stakeholders.

Phase one: EOI process

The first phase will be focused on promoting the EOI with identified key audiences, inviting them to submit an application of interest over a three-week period, and gathering responses. This phase is heavily informed by Ā Mātou Mauri Pounamu and their position as the physical manifestation of Ngā Mātāpono o Ihi Aotearoa¹. Applicants will be asked to submit responses relating to these mātāpono:

Kia pono ki te kaupapa – Be authentic to the purpose

Through your organisational interpretation of the mātāpono – Kia pono ki te kaupapa please describe your organisation's efforts to restore, reclaim and revitalise tākarō Māori:

Kia tika te mahi – Act with integrity

Through your organisational interpretation of the mātāpono – Kia tika te mahi, please describe your organisation's relationship and connection with the wider tākarō Māori (and/or play) sector:

Me Aroha ki te tangata – Respect others

Through your organisational interpretation of the mātāpono – Me aroha ki te tangata, please describe your organisation's vision of what would be possible under a better resourced and capable tākarō Māori system:

These questions will be able to be answered either via written submission of 500 words or a 4-minute video speaking to each mātāpono. The selection panel will then determine who will be invited to participate in the follow up process (phase two) through the application of weighted selection criteria.

The EOIs will be assessed, with communications sent to each organisation to notify them of the outcome. Successful organisations will be invited to progress to the interview phase of the process. Irrespective of the outcome, each applicant will receive detailed feedback relating to the decision-making process.

Phase two: Selection process

The chosen organisations will be invited to participate in an interview process with the selection panel. The applications will be assessed through a culturally appropriate decision-making framework with the working title of 'Māui Tinihanga'.

Heavily influenced by existing internal Ihi Aotearoa frameworks [Te Whetū Rehua](#) and [Maui Hīanga](#), the Māui Tinihanga framework was utilised in this instance for the development of culturally-responsive selection criteria relating specifically to tākarō Māori leadership and suitability for investment:

- Organisational Maturity – BY Māori (Taranga)
- Proven initiatives - WITH Māori (Maui Taha)
- Demonstrable unmet need - FOR Māori (Māui Roto)
- Expertise in tākarō Māori – THROUGH Māori (Māui Mua)
- Presence within wider tākarō system – IN / ON (Māui Waho)
- Ihi for tākarō Māori – (Māui Pōtiki)

The above criteria have been interwoven with Te Whetū Rehua domains and to the Āhuatanga attributed to each of the Māui Hīanga whānau. They will guide the selection panel across the interview process and will serve as a choosing matrix for determining who will qualify for Cohort One and/or Cohort Two investment.

For organisations who make the (interview) selection process but are unsuccessful, Sport NZ will offer to support their preparations to apply for a subsequent cohort.

What is Sport NZ's role in this project?

Sport NZ will:

- invest in and commission the project and guide each appointment in a manner that demonstrates our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- aim to provide development opportunities for the appointee, create cohorts of connected workers and ensure co-design opportunities are fully utilised.
- contract a learning and monitoring provider, who will be responsible for developing learning content for the tākarō Māori System and monitoring the project.
- monitor, evaluate, promote, and celebrate the project.

Can the roles be held by non-Māori organisations?

Yes. However, with the culturally appropriate choosing matrix being inspired by Te Whetū Rehua, greater weighting will be allocated to organisations demonstrating the implementation of 'as Māori' level outcomes.

The decision to allow collaborative applications is one example of how this may occur with existing collectives of Māori and non-Māori organisations each bringing unique strengths to the fore.

What will the contracts look like?

Sport NZ will follow its usual processes to establish the investment agreements. They will include Sport NZ's standard contract terms and conditions, and payments and requirements against these.

What if I still have questions?

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