Lake Taupo Protection Trust

Te wai, te iwi

# Research application guidelines and criteria

## Background

The purpose of the Lake Taupo Protection Trust Research Fund is to fund research projects that will help the trust reduce the manageable nitrogen entering Lake Taupo by a minimum of 20 per cent and so protect lake water quality.

The trust does this by supporting projects that solve problems or promote opportunities, to ensure sustainable, low nitrogen discharging land uses in the Taupo catchment.

For more information about the Lake Taupo Protection Trust and the research fund please visit www.laketaupoprotectiontrust.org.nz.

## Applications

The trust is seeking detailed proposals from applicants that meet the criteria stated in the funding brochure. These proposals will be assessed by a panel of two independent specialists in the field of sustainable land use and one trustee. The panel will shortlist the projects and recommend to the trustees which projects should receive funding.

Trustees of the Lake Taupo Protection Trust will make final decisions on the allocation of funds to projects presented to them.  This may mean that not all proposals will be funded or will receive the full amount of funding applied for.

**Proposals should:**

- clearly outline how the project will contribute to the trust achieving its objectives
- describe the concepts, methods and outcomes of the project and, where possible, quantify the direct and indirect benefits of the project to achieving the trust's objectives
- give clear and measurable objectives and milestones for the project
- include all information requested in the application form including detailed budgets, milestones, timeline, and leverage and management arrangements.

## Timeframes

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| Applications open: | 1 July 2011. |
| Applications close: | 31 August 2011. |
| Funding decisions notified: | 30 September 2011. |
| Contracts signed off: | 30 November 2011. |

Any questions on the application process should be directed to the Lake Taupo Protection Trust Secretary on 0800 888 380.

## General information

The Lake Taupo Protection Trust Research Fund was established to provide an opportunity to develop new and existing research that will result in reduced nitrogen discharges in the rural and urban environment.

The trust is seeking expert and reliable research that will assist it with meeting its objective of reducing manageable nitrogen discharges to Lake Taupo by 20 per cent.

**The type of research the trust will consider funding:**

- research that can be applied easily and effectively
- enables the transfer or extension of information and technology
- identifies sustainable low nitrogen land uses for the Lake Taupo catchment
- involves field trials or demonstration sites.

**Activities and expenditure that the trust will not fund:**

- pure research
- projects that benefit an individual or single business
- capital expenditure or capital items
- retrospective costs and projects
- participation in statutory processes, litigation or resource inventory work.

## Assessment

Assessment of projects will be based on the information provided by the applicant in the application form. Applications will be assessed by a panel of two independent specialists in the field of sustainable land use and one trustee. Other external advice may be sought for assessment of applications. The recommendations of the panel will be provided to the trust for final recommendation.

The assessment of research proposals involves a quality assurance process, which may identify areas that would benefit from the development of research or delivery capability, and this may be factored into the contract. The process could identify potential new directions for the research, or potential weaknesses in a particular approach, or likelihood of delivery of output and contribution to a particular outcome. In these circumstances the panel would then contact the applicant to discuss options available to modify the original proposal.

Information in project applications will generally be available only to the Lake Taupo Protection Trust Trustees and dministrative and finance contractors, and panel members. The panel may also make application information available to other parties when seeking external advice.

For projects that are similar, the panel may contact the relevant applicants and request that they coordinate or amalgamate their projects. To achieve this, the panel would make the proposal title, summary and applicant name available to other relevant applicants.

Note: If an applicant considers any part of their proposal to be confidential, a request to manage the information differently during the assessment process must be specified in the application form. The request must specify which part of the proposal is confidential and the reason for this.

## Intellectual property

Contractual arrangements regarding intellectual property will be negotiated individually with research providers. The trust proposes the following general principles to form the foundation of agreements on intellectual property.

- All parties act in good faith to create and maintain a cooperative and open relationship regarding intellectual property.
- Intellectual property brought to the project by any party remains that parties property and will be appropriately protected.
- Intellectual property created in the project is for the public good and should be publicly accessible to maximise use of any output from the research project.
- Fair recognition is received for expertise and contributions to the project.
- Returns to the parties are primarily created through service and through further research opportunities arising from the knowledge or processes developed from the research project.

The trust, as a council controlled organisation, operates under the Local Government Information and Meetings Act.

## Publicity

The Lake Taupo Protection Trust reserves the right to use information regarding grant funded projects for publicity purposes.

## Acknowledgement of funding

The Lake Taupo Protection Trust Research Fund must be acknowledged as a source of funding in all publications, and publicity regarding grant funded projects (the trust may specify the form and content of such acknowledgement).

## Financial reporting requirements

- Written progress reports and requests for payments as specified in the application form.
- Claims for payment must be submitted in the format supplied by the trust.
- Claims for payment must be authorised and certified by the project's financial manager.
- Proof of expenditure (such as tax invoices) must be available for audit purposes, but not necessarily submitted with a claim for payment.
- Claims for payment must be supported by progress reports that are in the format supplied by the trust.
- All projects will be available for audit for both financial and management purposes.
- The project manager must keep proper accounts and the trust may request a copy of the project accounts to accompany any progress payment requests.
- Any final payment of project funds may be withheld until the trust receives a final report of achievements against objectives and final set of project accounts.

## Assessment criteria

The research project will be assessed against the following assessment criteria.

- **Effectiveness** – the results of the research must demonstrate the ability to effectively reduce nitrogen discharge from land.
- **Relevance** – the research must be relevant to the Taupo catchment (such as soils, geology, land use systems).
- **Leverage** – the amount of additional funding or contributions from other sources (such as joint ventures or partnerships) brought to the project.
- **Cost effective** – the research must demonstrate value for money and result in economic reductions of nitrogen.
- **Ability to deliver** – the technical and project management skills and capabilities of those involved in the project are sufficient to ensure the project's success.
- **Likelihood of uptake and adoption of project findings** – the comunication and extension skills and capabilities of those involved in the project are sufficient to ensure

benefits to end users and other stakeholders are delivered.
- **Risk** – the extent that the research is based on contemporary work with a high likelihood of success.
- **State of proposed research or developing technology** – is the research or technology 'near market' or in the early stages of development.
- **Other factors** – where relevant, other factors will be considered in the overall assessment. For example, these factors could include:
  - timing of the research project
  - project innovation
  - benefits of the project to other publicly stated goals for sustainability.

## Application form – completion guidelines

- Only those applications submitted on the trust's application form will be accepted.
- All applications will be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt. If you do not receive an acknowledgement please contact the Lake Taupo Protection Trust Secretary on 0800 888 380.
- Completed forms must not exceed the space provided.
- If typing, please use 12 point Times New Roman or 11 point Arial font.
- Clear, easy to read and succinct project descriptions are required.

**1. Project title**

Provide a short and meaningful title for the project.

**2. Applicant group name**

The name of the group applying for the research funding – please note that this will be the name of the group used on the funding contract between the trust and the group. For this purpose the applicant group itself does not need to be a legal entity. However, in the case that the group is not a legal entity, all individual members of the project team may be liable for breach of contract with the trust.

**3. Community of interest**

The groups of people, organisations, or sectors drawn together by a shared problem or opportunity and will be the primary beneficiaries of the results coming out of funded projects.

Applications should be submitted directly by the community of interest or their agent (such as a closely allied organisation or individual acting on their behalf).

Briefly describe the community of interest being represented – including:
- what stakeholders it represents
- the group's purpose
- how and when the group was formed.

**4. Project summary**

Please briefly (maximum of half a page) give an overview of the proposal including:
- overall aim of the project
- how it fits the trust's objectives
- how the research will be done
- who is involved and what skills they will bring to the project
- how and when research findings are expected to be adopted by end users.

**5. Contact details**

Any contact from the trust during the application process will be directed via the person named here. This contact person must have sufficient knowledge about the application to answer any queries, and be contactable on the phone numbers given.

**6. Total research funding requested from the trust**

The total funding figure applied for, and the project's start and finish dates. Please note that the amount of funding applied for must include GST. All grants from the trust will incude GST.

**7. Project team composition**

Project manager – the person responsible for delivering the project results. The person may not be the contact person.

Please list other individuals who have a leadership role in the project and their contact details. The objective is to show that there is real community partnership and engagement.

**Financial manager** – the person responsible for tracking project spending and income, including in-kind support and funding from other sources. This person cannot be the same person as the project manager.

**Communication/extension** – the person providing this and other critical services to the project team.

**Others** – include any special flags such as request for confidentiality and potential conflict of interest.

**8. Problem/opportunity description**

Define what issue or what opportunity your application is addressing. Provide evidence of their importance and scale. Where possible, include quantifiable details and provide key references (maximum of 10 pages).

**9. Expected outcomes**

Explain what difference the project will make if it is successful and the intended benefit can be expected. Outline both – what practices or behaviours will change for the community of interest or stakeholders, and who the target 'end-user' audience will be. If this project is part of a long term strategy, explain how this project fits in. Where possible, include quantifiable details of field/demonstration trials and list key activities for technology transfer.

**10. How your project fits with the Lake Taupo Protection Trust**
Describe how your project fits with the objective of the Lake Taupo Protection Trust and how it fits with any other potential funding sources (such as local or regional authorities, levy bodies or industry, or other central government funding).

**11. Project design and delivery**
This section should describe what your project is actually going to do to reduce manageable nitrogen from entering Lake Taupo. This section should cover the following.

- **Design and direction** – provide an outline of the experimental or investigatory approach to be taken (such as trials to be established, research to be undertaken, interviews to be completed). Also describe how the project team or community of interest will help monitor progress and provide direction.
- **Knowledge transfer/extension** – describe how new information or knowledge generated will be communicated to the community of interest and, where appropriate, to wider stakeholder interests.
- **Ability to deliver** – demonstrate that the project has access to the necessary technical and project management skills to deliver on its intentions. Note: The name or individual or organisation who will provide any specialist skills required (such as technical), or else outline how such skills will be sourced. A maximum of five key curriculum vitae's (maximum three pages) can be attached to the proposal.
- **Monitoring/evaluation** – outline how progress will be monitored and how the impact/success of the project will be measured. Also, indicate what ongoing or long term plans you have for the project if it is successful.

**12. Previous work**
If relevant, specify previous relevant work and describe how this project will add value to this existing knowledge or practice base. Where applicable, outline why previous work has not adequately addressed the issue being investigated, and why the proposed approach is likely to be more successful.

**13. Milestones**
These are the major activities, stages or outputs of the project that are key to achieving the project's overall objectives. The milestone table will become the main basis for contracting the projects' objectives. They must include enough detail for the Lake Taupo Protection Trust, or its agents, to monitor project progress and substantiate payments. There will be an opportunity to review milestones prior to contracting. Collectively the milestones should show a logical, feasible path or network towards achieving a single objective.

Milestones must be measurable (auditable) and focus on achievement. Milestones should be short and clear.

Please ensure milestones:
- track progress towards the research objective(s), rather than measure the passing of time, though they should contain time-bound elements
- define the quality standard or measure of performance and the date it will be achieved – you may need to specify how you measure a standard, how it will be verified, and provide us with measurable points that illustrate how you will achieve the objective.

Quarterly progress reports are required and may be used as basis for interim payment. A final report is required at the completion of the project. This report is the final milestone and payment.

**Description:** Describe the main milestones for your project, ensuring they reflect the main activities and outputs described in Section 11.

**Due date:** Enter the planned completion date for each milestone.

**Estimated and total costs:** Enter the estimated cost for completing each milestone. Where there is co-funding the table should identify the amount and how this co-funding will be used.

**14. Project budget**
Applicants are required to complete the tables that describe the project's costs and where all of the project's funds will come from. All figures should include GST. Applicants must also provide a detailed breakdown of the project costings represented in this table (cash and in-kind) as an appendix to the completed application form.

**Non-Lake Taupo Protection Trust contributions** – note that projects that receive realistic cash contributions from their community of interest, or other parties, relative to their requested Lake Taupo Protection Trust investment, will have a stronger case for selection.

Please provide the name(s) and amount(s) of contributions from other sources including local government, private funds or trusts.

**Status of cash contributions** – please complete the table so assessors can see what stage the project team is at in securing cash contributions. The project review panel is aware that some co-funders are not able to commit to funding before the closing date of these applications, however downstream project approval and contracting will be contingent upon co-funding being secured. Any relevant correspondence from potential co-funders should be attached to the application form to evidence the status of discussions on co-funding.

**In-kind contributions** – details of in-kind contributions should be included here.

When assessing costs, please refer to Appendix 1 and 2 of this document.

## Application confirmation and submission

An appropriately authorised agent of the project team/ community of interest must submit the application to:
The Secretary
Lake Taupo Protection Trust
PO Box 4177
HAMILTON EAST 3247

**Applications must be received on or before 31 August 2011. Applications received after this date will not be considered, but may be resubmitted to future funding rounds.**

By submitting the application, the agent is undertaking that the information provided is true and correct. The applicant is also acknowledging that the assessment process is both relative and subjective, and therefore agrees to accept the Lake Taupo Protection Trust's authority as the final decision maker.

# Appendix 1:

## Definitions for project costs

**Personnel:** Wages/salaries, including associated costs such as PAYE, insurance, unless included under consultants and contractors.

**Administration:** Office costs other than wages such as rent/lease of offices and office equipment, power, phone, stationery, photocopying, printing other than for dissemination costs, unless included under consultants and contractors.

**Consultants and contractors:** Any payment made to consultants and contractors.

**Rental and leasing of equipment:** Plant, vehicles, laboratories (and equipment) unless included under consultants and contractors.

**Overheads:** Anything not covered in specified costs but too small to split into 'other'.

**Travel and accommodation:** Costs for travel and accommodation related to the project (but not travel costs associated with dissemination of results) unless included under consultants and contractors.

**Dissemination costs:** Includes costs of fieldays, seminars, printing and distributing reports and booklets, including associated travel, unless included under consultants and contractors.

**Financial/legal expenses:** Payments to accountants, auditors, lawyers.

**Other:** Any major cost items not already attributed.

# Appendix 2:

## Valuing and specifying 'in-kind' (non-cash) project contributions

For a contribution to count as 'in-kind', the contributor should incur actual and real costs resulting from being directly involved in the project. This does not include any stand-down time of equipment or laboratories, or the cost of personnel or equipment undertaking activities that form part of their normal day-to-day duties (such as doing something that would be done anyway), but that also forms part of the project, like ploughing a field and sowing a normal crop, part of which then becomes a trial plot).

For in-kind personnel costings, reasonable commercial rates should be used as a guide. If there are no commercial rates available, please use the following guidance.

Personnel should be valued at rates that allow for overheads, administrative costs and local travel expenses, which form part of the work done by an individual. These expenses cannot be claimed separately.

**Personnel rates**
Rate A: $75 per hour for technical, scientific expertise or professional advice – such as council officers, engineers, accountants.

Rate B: $25 per hour for general labour, administration and those not covered by Rate A.

Project support costs should be valued at the lower of actual cost or market value (such as cost of hire) and are restricted to the following costs:

- meeting or workshop costs, such as room or hall hire and catering
- the provision and use, in a directly beneficial and necessary way, of particular capital equipment or facilities, such as machinery and laboratories. Where these are necessary, their assessed value must be based on actual costs (excluding profit and capital charges) or an equivalent 'contracted in' service, whichever is the lower cost. All costs must include GST.