

Application questions for the Ārohia Full Grant

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Introduction

Here are the questions we propose to ask about your innovation if you apply for the Ārohia Full Grant.

They include questions based on those found in a typical industry pitch deck, designed to establish if your innovation has “commercial potential”. This is important because we want to be sure your innovation has a good chance of succeeding in the market, where it can deliver the wider benefits that the Ārohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant aims to encourage.

The questions about commercial potential fall within the following sections:

- Market Impact
- Commercial Feasibility
- Commercial Viability.

We also ask questions aimed at identifying whether your innovation meets the broader goals of the Ārohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant, which is about encouraging innovation that is world-leading and can benefit the wider innovation ecosystem in Aotearoa New Zealand. These questions fall within the following sections:

- Novelty
- Potential benefits for the innovation ecosystem (these benefits reflect what are referred to as “spillover benefits” in the Ārohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant Ministerial Direction).

Please note that:

- all questions are indicative at this stage, and we reserve the right to amend them prior to the launch of the Ārohia Full Grant
- some questions in the proposed “Market Impact” section of the Ārohia Full Grant application differ from, or ask for more detail than, the questions in the corresponding section of the Ārohia Seed Grant application - please read the questions carefully, so you’re aware of the full extent of the information we propose to ask as part of the Ārohia Full Grant application.

Market impact

These questions are about determining whether your innovation will successfully address a need in the market that is not currently being met.

We look at the potential market impact of your innovation first, as this is the foundation on which commercial potential ultimately rests. To succeed in the market, your innovation must be attractive to potential buyers/users who are willing to pay for it.

The questions here explore what problem or need your innovation addresses, how it works, the benefits it will deliver to customers/users, how it differs from anything else in the market and the size and growth potential of the market you will target.

1. Customer problem/need

What is the specific problem or unmet need that your innovation will solve? As part of your answer:

- tell us **who** has the problem/need, i.e. who's the audience that will benefit from your innovation?
- explain **why** this is an important and pressing problem/need to solve.

2. Solution - how it works

Tell us **what** your innovation is and **how** it works.

Remember to describe the integrated offering if your solution is a combination of innovations (e.g. product and process, service etc).

3. Solution - how it adds value for customers

How will your innovation benefit the customers you're targeting, i.e. how does it solve their problem/unmet need, and what are all the ways they get value from it?

4. Competition

Tell us how your solution will **differ** from, and be **better** than:

- anything competitors already offer, or
- anything your intended customers already use, to address their problem/need.

We'd also like to know how you think your competitors might **react** to your offering, and how you would **respond** to this.

5. Market size

Provide the following details about the size of the market you intend to target:

- the estimated size of the **total market** at the time of launch, i.e., the \$ revenue opportunity (or relevant financial metric) if you achieve 100% market share (please specify any applicable market verticals and geographies)
- what **share** of the market you hope to capture
- what average annual **growth** (%) you forecast for the total market size and your share during the 3 years from launch
- approximately how many customers you hope to **acquire** in each of these 3 years.

Novelty

This question will help us determine whether your innovation is potentially world-leading.

The Ārohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant aims to encourage innovation that's at the global frontier of what's possible. To help us assess this, we need to consider how novel your innovation is.

6. Novelty

Tell us **how** your solution is **novel**. Remember, novelty in the context of the Ārohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant is a product, process, service or business model (or a combination of these) that is completely new, or a significant enhancement or scaling up of what currently exists:

- in the world, or
- within a sector/industry globally, or
- in Aotearoa New Zealand, or
- within a sector/industry in Aotearoa New Zealand.

If you've sought advice/undertaken research regarding freedom to operate or intellectual property, please reference this in your answer, to help demonstrate the novelty of your innovation.

Potential benefits for innovation ecosystem

The Ārohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant aims to support innovation which delivers benefits that extend beyond the business responsible for it, and can help transform the wider innovation ecosystem in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This question will help us assess what the potential benefits of your innovation are for the innovation ecosystem.

7. Potential benefits for innovation ecosystem

Tick all relevant boxes to indicate which potential benefits your proposed innovation could deliver to the wider innovation ecosystem in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- creation of a new market category or product category
- introduction of new in-country capability (physical or digital)
- attraction of expertise to Aotearoa New Zealand
- exchange of knowledge
- creation of a more networked ecosystem
- wildcard benefit (any other benefit/s to the innovation ecosystem you can think of).

Explain how the innovation could deliver the benefits selected above.

Commercial Feasibility

These questions are about determining whether you have the capability to make, deliver and support your innovation. To help us assess this, we ask you about your team, go-to-market and channel plans and technology roadmap.

8. Team

To help us understand the team that will help you deliver your innovation, tell us:

- who the current members of your team are, and what value they bring, e.g. skills, expertise, resources and connections
- what market advantage the team offers, versus your competitors
- if there's anyone else you need to form the ideal team - if so, who you would need, what value would they add and how will you get them on board?

9. Go-to-market and channel plans

To help us understand how you plan to get your innovation into the hands of users, please tell us:

- how you will affordably reach new customers to make them aware of your solution, and encourage them to adopt it
- what sales and support channels you will use, and why
- if you're in a B2B setting, how you will address the involvement of different stakeholders (such as procurement, finance and operations) in the decision to purchase your innovation, recognising they may not be its end users
- if there's anyone else who's critical to your innovation that you haven't engaged with yet, and how you plan to engage with them
- what market entry challenges you are anticipating (e.g. regulations, timing imperatives, market inertia, manufacturing capacity/capability) and how you will address these.

10. Technology roadmap

To give us confidence that your innovation is technologically robust, please tell us:

- what technology is essential to your innovation
- how you have proved that your technology can work, including in the intended environment and at scale
- whether you need to conduct any further technical development, and if so, what your plans are for this (please specify high-level timelines for any further work planned).

Commercial Viability

These questions will help us determine if your innovation can financially succeed in the marketplace.

To help us assess this, we ask about your business model and financials, sustainable growth roadmap and any recent traction/partners you have gained.

11. Business model and financials

Provide the following details to help us understand the proposed business model and financials associated with your innovation:

- estimated potential returns compared to key costs, e.g. production, customer acquisition and retention
- pricing strategy, e.g. what pricing model will you use? (cost plus? value based? other?)
- how your cost/revenue model differs to the industry norms
- any key risks that could impact your business model and financials, and how you will mitigate these
- a summary historical (last two years) and three-year forecast of financial information - this should contain dollars and key metrics/assumptions, such as the number of customers and conversion rate (include forecasts on the amount of money you will spend on key operations such as marketing, sales, product development, and customer service).

12. Sustainable growth roadmap

To help us understand the longer-term potential of your innovation, tell us:

- how you plan to financially sustain your innovation, beyond the period supported by any Ōrohia Innovation Trailblazer Grant funding that you may receive
- any plans you have over the next 3-5 years to:
 - acquire new customers
 - retain existing customers
 - grow the lifetime value of your customers (the contribution you expect a given customer to generate over time)
 - manage the costs of operating your business.

13. Recent traction and partners

So that we can understand what traction you've gained to date, please tell us about:

- any successes you've had relating to the innovation - this could include product development achievements; deals in pipeline; sign-up of early adopters; expressions of interest; intellectual property mechanisms employed; securing of funding; or other project milestones achieved
- any partners (outside your business) you have established a relationship with, and what value they bring to developing and/or commercialising your innovation - partners could include advisors, mentors, industry leaders, iwi, community groups, suppliers, investors or an external governance board
- the key measures that will demonstrate your proposed solution is delivering the outcome(s) you're trying to achieve.