

7 October 2025

s9(2)(a)

Mālō e lelei s9(2)(a)

## RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST (REF: DOIA012-2025/26)

On 15 June 2025, you contacted the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding decision-making processes used for selecting Tauola Business Fund awardees. I have outlined your specific request and my response below.

*I am currently conducting research into the Tauola funding programme, specifically regarding the decision-making process used by your board when selecting funded applicants for each round.*

*I understand that for the 2025 Tier 1 Fund (\$80,000 – \$100,000), Nasita Production Limited was one of the recipients. I also note that this business was a recipient in the previous Round Two and subsequently went into liquidation in February 2025. Given this, I am particularly interested in understanding:*

- 1. What criteria and evaluation processes are used to determine successful applicants in each funding round, particularly in Tier 1?**

All applications were required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- An ability to create employment opportunities for Pacific peoples
- A commitment to improving Pacific participation in the labour market
- An ability to increase productivity and scale up
- Job creation within six months of receiving funding
- Build capacity and capability to participate in economic development projects
- Good health and safety practices.

Given the funding amounts for High value and Tier 1 applicants, further information was requested. Refer to the table below.

### Auckland

9 Ronwood Ave, Manukau  
PO Box 97005,  
South Auckland Mail Centre 2240  
P: 09 265 3200

### Wellington National Office

Level 7, 1 Bowen House  
Wellington, 6011  
PO Box 833, Wellington 6143  
P: 04 473 4493

### Christchurch

Level 1, BNZ Centre  
120 Hereford St  
Private Bag 4741,  
Christchurch 8011

FUNDING LEVEL	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
High value applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance Sheet Statement from two consecutive time periods: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 and 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024</li> <li>• Profit and Loss Statement from two consecutive time periods: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 and 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024</li> <li>• Cashflow Statement</li> </ul>
Tier 1 applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credible endorsement of business</li> <li>• Business plan and indicative budget for 2025</li> <li>• Most recent financial statements and audited accounts</li> </ul>

All applications underwent a structured, multi-stage assessment to ensure alignment with the Fund's objectives. Businesses were evaluated at each stage based on economic potential, job creation impact, and business maturity, demonstrating key elements such as financial management, risk strategy, and marketing capability.

Applicants also had to meet strict quantitative benchmarks to ensure financial viability and scalability. Those that successfully passed all stages were then reviewed by an independent evaluation panel, including external experts, ensuring fairness, transparency, and strategic alignment.

**2. *How does the board address situations where previously funded recipients go into liquidation shortly after receiving funding?***

An independent evaluation panel (the panel) was established to assess applications and recommend funding in line with the programme's assessment criteria and evaluation process, rather than a board. All applications were assessed based on information available and provided at the time of submission. Where relevant, applicants confirmed their trading status and provided supporting documentation. Changes to a business's status after the application period are outside the scope of the assessment process and therefore, beyond the role of the panel.

**3. *What mechanisms are in place to ensure that funding is allocated to sustainable and high-impact Pasifika businesses, especially given that several strong and well-regarded applicants were unsuccessful in the recent 2025 round?***

*Any transparency you can offer on the fund allocation framework and follow-up processes would be greatly appreciated, as it will assist in informing both my research and recommendations to potential future applicants.*

The programme's assessment criteria and evaluation process were designed to support the panel's funding recommendations, including for identifying sustainability and high impact based on evidence available at the time. The outcome of the 2025 funding round reflects the highly competitive nature of the fund.

Regarding follow-up processes, recipients of the fund were required to submit a work plan outlining how their initiative would be achieved (with deliverable milestones), a mid-term progress report against the work plan, and a final completion report as part of their contractual obligations.

As part of the mutual contractual obligations between the Ministry and recipients of the fund, both parties were required to discuss any matters including notifying and consulting each other immediately of any actual or anticipated issues that could delay, significantly impact or change the implementation, delivery or any other aspect of the deliverables.

These contractual obligations were intended to ensure that recipients remained accountable to their agreed work plans and deliverables, and that proposed initiatives progressed as intended.

Please note, following the implementation of Budget 25, the Tauola Business Fund has been discontinued.

In line with standard OIA practice, the Ministry proactively publishes some of its responses to OIA requests. As such, this letter may be published on the Ministry for Pacific Peoples' website. Your personal details will be removed, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you or your organisation.

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at: [uia\\_requests@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:uia_requests@mpp.govt.nz).

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Mālō 'aupito



**Mata'afā Florence Malama**  
Acting Deputy Secretary  
Commissioning & Partnerships