

31 March 2025

s9(2)(a)

Mālo e lelei s9(2)(a)

RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST (REF: DOIA033-2024/25)

On 3 March 2025, you contacted the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding the Tauola Business Fund application and selection process. I have outlined your specific request and my response below.

1. *The criteria for which applications were measured against.*

All applications are 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

High value applicants were also required to provide the following financial documents:

- Balance Sheet Statement for two consecutive periods: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 and 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- Profit and Loss Statement for two consecutive periods: 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 and 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- Cashflow Statement

All applications underwent a structured, multi-stage assessment to ensure alignment with the Tauola Business Fund's objectives. All applicants were evaluated at each stage based on economic potential, job creation impact, business maturity, demonstration of 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.

Auckland

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

Wellington National Office

Level 2, 44 The Terrace
Wellington, 6011
PO Box 833, Wellington 6143
P: 04 473 4493

Christchurch

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

2. The list of all applicants which were successful and why they were successful.

We are in the process of contract negotiations and therefore cannot release this information at this time. The Ministry however will publish all successful applicants to our website. A Ministry staff member can be arranged to contact you once this information is publicly available.

Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information requested will soon be publicly available.

3. List of applicants who have been successful before this funding round and how many times they have been successful previously in the last 5 years.

The Tauola Business Fund was established in April 2022. You will find a list of successful applicants for round one and two on the Ministry's website.

Click here: [Ministry for Pacific Peoples — Tauola Business Fund](#)

I am also refusing this part of your request under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information requested is publicly available.

4. Any declared conflict of interests between any of the applicants and those making the decisions to approve funding and/or otherwise.

The Ministry requires all personnel both internal and external who are involved in the assessment of applications for funding to complete and sign the Ministry's conflict of interest and confidential agreement form at the commencement of the process and again once all participants are known to the Ministry.

Where a potential or perceived conflict of interest is disclosed, a conflict-of-interest management plan is agreed to manage the declared conflict of interest, considering the effect on the persons role and responsibilities in the application/ funding activity, as well as the risks to the process and the Ministry's reputation.

All conflict management plans are managed by Ministry staff not directly involved with the application process. For the Tauola Business Fund, two declarations of a conflict of interest were disclosed by the independent evaluation panel. Those who made these declarations removed themselves from the decision-making process.

5. The makeup of the decision-making committee and Agencies they belong to.

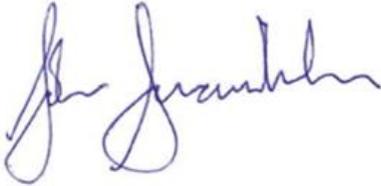
The independent evaluation panel consisted of prominent business experts and senior leaders of the Ministry. External panel members were from PwC, Agite Consulting and the Pacific Business Trust.

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: oiarequests@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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

Mālō 'aupito

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Tu'amoheloa', written in a cursive style.

John Tu'amoheloa
Deputy Secretary, Commissioning and Partnerships