



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA



Te Parahia Contestable Fund - 2026

This contestable fund has been established to help achieve our target sustainability outcomes by harnessing the innovation and expertise of the University community in addressing our global and local environmental challenges.

The fund uses revenue from the carbon levy, applied internally to all bookings for air travel, which was established in 2020 as part of the [Zero Carbon Plan](#).

Funding and Criteria

It is anticipated \$150,000 will be made available in the 2026 contestable fund round. Project bids are to be between a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$50,000 and will be assessed by a review panel against the following criteria:

- Impact – projects and initiatives that will deliver tangible (and measurable) impact towards better environmental outcomes, increased engagement with sustainability issues and/or growing the capacity of people to take meaningful action on sustainability issues.
- Maturity – projects and initiatives that build on existing work and relationships and/or have already undertaken significant planning to ensure the appropriate resourcing and approvals are in place to enable effective delivery.
- Benefit to the University – projects and initiatives that contribute to the sustainability objectives and the strategic priorities of the University. Projects that could develop into, or support, larger external research funding bids are welcome.
- Planning - projects and initiatives that have achievable outcomes, justified budgets, and teams with the necessary skills and capacity.
- Engagement - projects and initiatives that capture the imagination, involve the wider University community and grow our reputation.
- Innovation – projects that deliver new perspectives or ‘out of the box’ thinking for solutions to our global and local sustainability challenges.
- Diversity – spreading funding across different parts of the University and different functional activities, while also supporting projects with limited alternative funding avenues.

Key Dates

Open for applications:	22 October 2026
Deadline for applications:	22 November 2026
Funding available from:	January 2027
Funding to be spent by:	17 December 2027

Eligibility

The Te Parahia contestable fund is open to all VUW staff (academic and professional staff). All projects must have a Project Leader who will be responsible for the management and reporting. The Project Leader must be accessible for the duration of the project and be either:

- a permanent member of the University's staff, or
- a staff member employed on a contract with terms of more than one year covering the entire period of the initiative funded.

Students and external collaborators are encouraged to be included in the project team, but they cannot be the Project Leader.

The fund is **not** for:

- initiatives led by the Sustainability team
- sponsorship of external projects not led by University staff or students
- carbon-intensive activities, such as air travel
- "business as usual" activities
- literature reviews
- salaries for ongoing activity
- IT-related overheads, and
- internal transfers, e.g. overhead costs or contributions to the costs of other parts of the University.

Operation of the Fund

Funding will be allocated to the Project Leader via an internal journal or the establishment of a research grant. Monies will be spent according to project conditions and specifications. Oversight will be by the Manutaki - Director, Sustainability.

Reporting

Project Leaders will be required to report to the Sustainability Team on the progress of their project against the objectives specified in their application mid-way through the project timeline and on completion of the project.

To apply for funding simply complete the Application Form below and email it to sustainability@vuw.ac.nz



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Te Parahia Contestable Fund Application Form

Title of Project	
Applicant / Project Leader	
Applicant School / Institute / Centre / CSU	

Project Summary (Max 150 words)

Provide a succinct outline of your proposal identifying how it meets the criteria of this fund. What are the goals of the project? Use plain English language, suitable for a non-technical audience

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Contributors (Max 100 words)

List all project team members (internal and external) who will be involved in delivering the project, what their roles will be in the project and what skills and expertise they provide.

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Project Activities (Max 200 Words)

Describe, in logical order, what you will do during this project including processes, tools, equipment and events.

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List Project Outputs (Max 100 words)

State the tangible deliverables that support environmental sustainability resulting from the project. These include publications, teaching tools, prototypes, exhibitions, performances, patents, publicity, operational improvements, scholarships, external research funding bids etc. Provide a rationale for why specific outputs have been targeted, and what the scale of their impact will be.

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Strategic Significance (Max 100 words)

How does your project align with the University's Strategic Plan?

If your project is being used to support a wider external research funding bid, how does it align to the [MBIE Science Investment Plan](#) or the criteria for other relevant funding mechanisms?

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Project Timetable (Milestones)

It is mandatory to enter a project start and end date and at least one milestone.

Project Start Date:	
Project End Date:	

Date	Milestone

Total amount applied for (excluding GST) – minimum \$5,000 - maximum \$50,000

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Other Sources of Funding

Internal University funding (where from and how much?)	
External funding (where from and how much?)	
TOTAL	

Budget (Max 100 words)

Provide a breakdown of the items your funding will be allocated to including research assistants, consultancy, software, field trips, communications, events, equipment etc.

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Manager / Head of School Approval

Provide the endorsement of the applicant's manager or Head of School in support of this application

Name of Manager / Head of School	
Role of Manager	
Signature of Manager	

Email this completed form to sustainability@vuw.ac.nz