



Request for Proposals  
Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge  
Innovation Fund

October 2016

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## 1. Innovation Fund

The purpose of the Challenge Innovation Fund is to introduce new innovative approaches, capability, research and researchers to the Challenge. This is the second and final call for the Innovation Fund in Phase I of the Challenge.

## 2. Duration and Value of projects

Funding available	\$1.5M (ex GST) per year for 2 years
Expected value per project	Maximum of \$150,000 per year for 2 years.
Project duration	Up to 2 years
Project start date	1 July 2017
Project completion date	By 30 June 2019
Eligibility	Open to all New Zealand based researchers*

*\*With the exception of researchers who are currently Programme Leaders or Project Leaders within the Challenge.*

## 3. Application process and timeline

This call will be a two stage process. The initial Expression of Interest will be evaluated and followed by an invitation to successful parties to submit detailed proposals. The closing date for the Expression of Interest is noon **30 November 2016**. Proposals must be submitted on the template to [sustainableseasNC@niwa.co.nz](mailto:sustainableseasNC@niwa.co.nz). Late proposals will not be accepted.

The templates for the Expressions of Interest can be downloaded from the links below:

[Innovation fund expression of interest template](#)

[Innovation fund expression of interest template – project 2.2.2](#)

The template for the detailed proposals will be made available to successful parties.

Expression of interest due	noon 30/11/2016
Notification of results and invitation to submit detailed proposals	21/12/2016
Full and detailed proposals due	15/3/2017
Successful proposals notified	18/5/2017

## 4. Scope of call

This call covers two categories. The first category relates to an open call for innovative funding proposals where the research will **significantly contribute to the Challenge Objective**; the second relates specifically to innovative funding proposals within the **Valuable Seas Programme, Project 2.2.2**.

#### 4.1 Proposals that will contribute significantly to the overall Objective of the Challenge

Proposals are sought that will contribute significantly to the Challenge meeting its Objective: *“Enhance utilisation of our marine resources within environmental and biological constraints”* and will complement the research already funded or planned within the Challenge. These projects are outlined in the [Research Plan](#) and full proposals of those currently funded are available [here](#).

Successful proposals may be in the areas of biophysical science, social science, mātauranga Māori, economics or tool development and are encouraged to be interdisciplinary. In addition proposals should have the following characteristics:

- Innovative, high quality research
- A clear and direct contribution to meeting the Challenge Objective
- Complementary to currently funded projects in the Challenge
- Recognition and exploration of benefits relevant to MBE’s Vision Mātauranga Policy and Māori communities.

#### 4.2 Proposals that specifically address Project 2.2.2 in the Research Plan

Proposals are also requested that specifically address Project 2.2.2 in the Research Plan *“Methods to increase diversification in marine economies”* and address how we can add value to the marine economy. A defining attribute of this category of proposals versus the above is a clear connection between research aims and commercial activities, with the view that outcomes will serve as a catalyst for future economic growth within an EBM framework.

Successful proposals will have the following characteristics:

- Innovative, high quality research
- A clear and direct contribution to meeting the Challenge Objective
- Adding value to the marine economy
- Recognition and exploration of benefits to VM.
- Aligned or co-funding, demonstrating that industry recognises the value of the research

Areas of interest include but are not limited to:

- Adding value to the economy while reducing or remediating environmental stress in marine ecosystems
- Enhancing diversification of the economy from marine industry (current and future) or new marine commercialisation prospects, including use of waste by-products and new energy sources
- Developing new technologies and / or approaches for increasing value of activities within environmental constraints (e.g. increasing value within spatial limitations)
- Developing new synergies between land-based activities / industry, coastal environmental monitoring, connectivity or cross-system remediation
- Harnessing international research and / or bioinformatics to add value to existing marine industries, ideally also reducing waste flow and environmental burden

- Identifying new marine-based commercial ventures for harnessing interest and support for and from Māori economic programmes.

**This list is not exhaustive and innovative ideas are encouraged. No specific weighting will be accredited to these topics over and above other innovative proposals.**

#### 4.3 What will not be funded through the Innovation Fund

- Research that aims to identify, quantify or map economic marine resources<sup>1</sup>
- Research that repeats research conducted in other areas
- Education and outreach activities
- Researchers based outside New Zealand
- Purchase of equipment.

### 5. Assessment criteria

The Expressions of Interest and full proposals will be assessed against the following criteria.

1. Innovation and ability to bring new capability/capacity to the Challenge
2. Clear identification of aims
3. Technical rigor, consistency with best practice and track record of research team
4. Contribution to the Challenge Objective
5. Alignment to the MBIE Vision Mātauranga Policy
6. Potential benefit to Māori and communities

Two additional criteria apply to proposals submitted for Project 2.2.2

7. Contribution to “adding value/increased diversification of our marine economy”
8. Co-funding associated with the proposal

### 6. Assessment Process

Proposals will be assessed by the Science Leadership Team with external advice from the [Independent Science Panel](#) and the [Kāhui](#) of the Challenge and independent expert reviewers.

In the case of the proposals associated with project 2.2.2, expertise will include a specially convened assessment panel.

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<sup>1</sup> These were determined to be out of scope of the Challenge in the early stages of development of the Research Plan