

Research Proposal

A. PROJECT TITLE	Kia tika te hī ika: Exploring fisheries tikanga and mātauranga amongst the ICP Iwi Partners
B. SHORT TITLE	Kia tika te hī ika: Exploring fisheries tikanga and mātauranga
C. THEME / PROGRAMME	Blue Economy - Innovation Fund

A. PROJECT KEY RESEARCHERS			
Role	Name	Institution / company	Email
Project Leader / Kairangahau Māori	Irene Kereama-Royal Ngāpuhi, Parehauraki, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Ngāti Tuwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto, Kairangahau Māori.	Ngā Wai A Te Tūi Māori & Indigenous Research Centre	ikereamaroyal@unitec.ac.nz
Project Co-Leader / Kairangahau Māori	Maru Samuels, Ngāi Te Rangi, Te Rarawa, NgaiTakoto, General Manager	Iwi Collective Partnership	maru@iwicollective.co.nz
Kairangahau Māori	Eruera Lee-Morgan	Ngā Wai A Te Tūi Māori & Indigenous Research Centre	

B. PROJECT PARTNERS		
Name	Organisation / company / agency / Iwi / Māori	Role in project
Mere George	Chair, Iwi Collective Partnership comprising 18 formal iwi members & 1 associate iwi: Ngāti Porou Te Arawa Ngāti Tūwharetoa Ngāi Te Rangi Ngāti Awa Whakatohea Te Rarawa Taranaki Iwi Ngāti Ruanui Ngāa Rauru Kiiitahi Te Aitanga ā Māhaki Rongowhakaata Ngaitai Ngāti Manawa Ngāti Whare Rangitaane Ngāti Maru (Taranaki) Tapuika Associate iwi: Ngai Tāmanuhiri	Co-development partners
Prof Jenny Lee-Morgan	Director, Ngā Wai A Te Tūi Māori & Indigenous Research Centre: Unitec Institute of Technology	Research Institute Partner

C. ABSTRACT/SUMMARY

Established in 2010, Iwi Collective Partnership (ICP) is a collaboration of 19 like-minded iwi who believe that working together toward a common vision, based on shared Māori values, achieves superior outcomes over working alone. As a business ICP creates value by collectivising the annual fishing rights that derive from iwi quota and taking a more strategic approach to management of the portfolio. ICP does not engage directly in fishing operations, choosing instead to partner with reputable fishing companies to undertake those operations on their behalf. After 10 years using this particular business model, ICP now wishes to review its strategy with a particular desire; to make tikanga Māori more explicit in its practices, particularly in the way ICP's collective fishing rights are harvested by its commercial fishing partners.

This will bring about a new approach to fisheries management, framed within an ICP story about its brand, and that is strongly informed by tikanga, that is applied to enhance the established brands of ICP's commercial fishing partners.

This research project forms the critical first phase of the brand development, which is to research the collective tikanga of the iwi members of the ICP as it relates to commercial fishing. Iwi will provide examples of how tikanga practices are being applied at a local level and therefore informing the group at the ICP level. Such practices may relate only to specific locations and specific species of fish that are of special significance to the ICP's iwi membership. Tikanga principles will be explored during the research phase with the outcome being to inform the tikanga practices of the ICP at a collective iwi level.

The research outputs will form the foundation upon which the new indigenous brand will be built, and the adoption of new practices will enhance and transform the ICP's unique Iwi business model.

D. PROBLEM DEFINITION/OPPORTUNITY

Fishing in Aotearoa New Zealand is an ancient activity that was first exercised according to tikanga (customs) within whānau, hapū and iwi, and founded in te Ao Māori. Colonial settlement brought alternative sets of law and customs that were imposed on our tikanga practices. 150 years on and the implementation of the Fisheries Treaty Settlement presents a different seascape for Māori in commercial fishing in 2020. While Iwi Māori have returned as quota owners, little has occurred to enable the recovery of the tikanga practices lost.

This research will begin to recover that tikanga within an innovative framework that empowers Māori fisheries companies (AHCs & MIOs) from a mātauranga Māori perspective. This project seeks to reveal tikanga associated with Tangaroa and fishing in particular, to make provision for practice informed evaluation to innovate commercial fishing and the utilisation of fisheries settlement assets. Research outcomes include the development of a tikanga informed assessment and evaluation framework to enhance and improve seafood economic returns that are consistent with social, cultural and ecological imperatives. It is expected that this tikanga framework may be applicable nationally within the Iwi Māori fisheries sector.

Solution/ Output This kaupapa Māori research project proposes transformative fisheries practice based on tikanga Māori to improve the social, cultural and ecological goals of the ICP as an exemplar of fisheries leadership in Aotearoa. The research contributes to the challenge objectives proposing outcomes that are distinctive to Aotearoa's context such as; - The development of fisheries business models premised on Māori fishery values / customs / tikanga, - incorporating the use of Mātauranga Māori inspired innovation to support blue economy activities, and; - utilising Māori leadership in the fishing industry accessing their knowledge and practices in traditional fishing for use in 2020.

Key informants from across the New Zealand commercial fishing value chain (through whakapapa, quota ownership, Māori fisheries management, harvesting, processing, marketing and sales) will contribute their knowledge and mātauranga through in depth interviews and wānanga of relevant tikanga, practices, Iwi difference and personal accounts to provide significant contribution to the research outputs answering the key research question; what can tikanga do to inform commercial fishing practice?

E. OUTPUT/SOLUTION

This research project will investigate examples where tikanga has or is being applied in specific locations or with respect to certain species of fish that are of special significance to ICP's iwi membership. From the case studies, key tikanga principles will be identified that can be applied within ICP's collaborative iwi kaupapa. Ultimately, the project and the tikanga principles will inform the development of a unique ICP brand story and fisheries management system that ICP will develop in collaboration with its commercial fishing partners. There are 4 stages to the brand story development process:

1. Brand, Story & Fisheries Management System Design.
2. Tikanga Research Project.
3. Collaboration with Commercial Fishing Partners to Assess How the Tikanga Research will be applied in Practice.
4. Finalisation of Brand, Story & Fisheries Management System for Implementation.

The scope of this research project is focused exclusively on **stage 2**, which is to investigate examples of how tikanga is already being applied in real life situations in the practices of ICP's iwi membership. The project outcome will have value as an independent standalone piece of research, however, it will have even greater value contributing to stages 3 and 4 of the development process outlined above. The research project will take 2 years to complete with the total process expected to take 4 years. ICP and other independent funding sources are required for stages 1, 3 & 4.

ICP will fully utilise the research findings for implementation within its business model. Covering a significant sector of the Māori fisheries sector within the ICP membership, the impact this research could have shouldn't be underestimated. There are existing global incentives for applying an indigenous approach to fisheries management and this trend is likely to continue to grow. The availability of the results and findings of this project more broadly will enable other parts of the sector to benefit and perhaps incentivise changes in behaviour and approach both within the industry nationally and globally. In addition, potential links to, and/or tikanga insights gained through other research within the Challenge (e.g. traditional aquaculture practice), could support benefits beyond fisheries management.

F. PROPOSED RESEARCH/APPROACH

Introduction

Kaupapa Māori approaches are used in many settings and contexts of Māori development and continue to inform and frame the way in which Māori engage and transform their own development. Kaupapa Māori research is central to this research project, locating the research community in the centre of the research and including one of its own personnel to co-lead the project and to commence study as a Masters student at Unitec, with research that contributes directly to the project.

The proposed research utilises a kaupapa Māori approach to investigate tikanga practices within Māori fisheries management today. As the first self-directed research project undertaken by the group, a collaborative, co-developed research partnership approach with Ngā Wai A Te Tūi Māori and Indigenous Research Centre ("NWaTT") ensures the ICP members are fully supported in building their own research capability and conducting this research project.

Alignment to the Innovation Fund and overall VM Objectives:

The overall goal of this project is to make a significant, impactful contribution to indigenising the blue economy, in ways that support the economic development of the ICP and other Iwi organisations and environmental integrity of Māori within the fisheries industry. This project's specific aims are to:

- (1) identify and reflect Māori knowledge systems, values frameworks, and tikanga based practices in fisheries management;
- (2) develop case studies and short video clips of groups that embed tikanga Māori within their customary commercial activities be that exercising kaitiakitanga over a region or with sustaining marine ecosystem processes within a particular location
- (3) integrate that knowledge into a framework for ICP that informs the 4 stages of brand development for the ICP.

These aims align with the *Theme 2* of the Core Research Project Portfolios: "Creating Value from a Blue Economy - Phase II".

The Kia tika te hī ika: Exploring fisheries tikanga and mātauranga amongst the ICP Iwi Partners objective and aims align well with the **Core Portfolio Project 2.3** "Indigenising the Blue Economy in Aotearoa".

Within **Project 2.3** there are **3** research questions to be explored:

- 1. What does a multi-sector Māori Blue Economy look like at regional and national levels?*
- 2. What would an indigenised New Zealand Blue economy look like, what opportunities and benefits would it offer and what risks and challenges must be addressed to achieve it?*
- 3. What institutions, structures, practices, information and measures would be required to create and realise the opportunities of an indigenised New Zealand blue economy?*

In response to these questions, our proposed project will address some of what is required of questions 2 & 3 through the exploration of tikanga Māori practices currently in use within the ICP membership, offering an insight into what an indigenised blue economy could look like for one industry sector and some of the opportunities and benefits it could offer. This will enable our project to inform and be informed about the levers and avenues already available or to be developed, that incentivise an indigenised blue economy. The detail about how our project will work in partnership with project 2.3 is still under development given the full proposal for that project is not yet complete.

Similarly, if the project team do manage to visit locations of fisheries practices around the regions of New Zealand without covid restrictions, the **outcomes sought from the Challenge Theory of Change** could be realised. In particular our project provides a significant contribution towards *Outcome 3*:

Outcome 3. Knowledge from the Challenge (science and mātauranga) is used in decision making to improve ecological health and influences Aotearoa New Zealand’s marine management practice and policy.

That contribution will be achieved by providing mātauranga through undertaking the research in this project to assist the ICP Board in its decision making to improve fisheries management and therefore the ecological health of Tangaroa. The project will also share the knowledge gathered from the research to inform other Challenge research (e.g. other Innovation Fund projects) and influence the further development of Aotearoa’s marine management practice and policy.

Alignment with Vision Mātauranga

The implementation of Vision Mātauranga for this portfolio of projects is stated as “applying Vision Mātauranga to all Themes and Programmes”. The portfolio will seek to achieve this by seeking:

“A strong Vision Mātauranga oversight will be maintained across the breadth of the Challenge research, and its approach to working with Māori. This will be achieved through resourcing specific support and initiatives that will assist and guide science leaders and researchers in the application of the Vision Mātauranga Policy to ensure clear and beneficial pathways for the delivery and uptake of research outcomes for Māori. This will include proactively creating and supporting mechanisms for building capability and capacity, as well as effective engagement, communication and relationship management with iwi, hapū and Māori organisations.”

Our project is strongly aligned to this objective as the proposed research is deeply embedded in Te Ao Māori perspectives and conducted in ways that build capacity and capability and engages effectively within Te Ao Māori through the ICP’s 20 Iwi members.

Kia tika te hī ika: Fisheries Tikanga of the ICP Project Plan

The research will be implemented through undertaking the following:

1. Project planning, required approvals (including Ethics), identification of 6-10 case study partners
2. Interviews and wānanga to gather data and information
3. Literature review of available relevant published information
4. In-field interviews and observations of tikanga based fisheries practices
5. Two wānanga (locations to be confirmed) to further build on the information and knowledge gathered
6. Analysis of data, information and knowledge
7. Testing analysis with ICP representatives
8. Finalisation of analysis and findings
9. Production of report/publications and video content
10. Launch of report and videos to the ICP Group and findings made available on various platforms
11. Research planning beyond this project that supports the wider programme.

Collaboration and co-development of the research project has eventuated in the following ways;

1. The ICP formed a partnership with NWAaTT to collaborate within the research, co-lead the project and begin to build its own research capacity and capability. NWAaTT led by Dr Jenny Lee-Morgan, comprises a team of specialist researchers who along with research resources (access to the Unitec’s library) are available to the project as support mechanisms for this project team. NWAaTT, a Māori and indigenous describes its work as:

“working to reclaim Mātauranga Māori — goals, aspirations and issues from an indigenous perspective — and using Māori concepts, knowledge, theories and practice to think about and solve contemporary issues in society that helps to address people’s needs, improve conditions, and enhance lives.”
2. The ICP has agreed to facilitate the relationship between NWAaTT and its Iwi members, providing appropriate introductions and hosting with the 6-10 Iwi case study partners who will participate in the research project.
3. The GM of the ICP joins the research team as a researcher to gain experience in building research capability and capacity within the ICP and to encourage the exploration of future research participation.

4. The project team will observe best practice research protocols and practices to ensure the research is ethical and culturally observant and be guided and informed by the ICP members about appropriate tikanga and observances within which to conduct the interviews (and possibly site visits to significant places) within their communities.
5. The ICP will ensure appropriate permissions are granted to take transcript recordings, video clips and photo images of the interviewees (ethics approval is addressed in a later section).
6. NWAaTT have agreed to provide a centre for an ICP sponsored Masters student, to complete study commitments while receiving research supervision within a kaupapa Māori research environment at the NWAaTT offices.

We will collaborate in the research aims to bring together the expertise of the ICP and NWAaTT with kaupapa Māori research and industry knowledge merging to explore mātauranga and tikanga Māori that enhances the business and kaupapa of the ICP members.

The research team will identify (through self-identification or nomination) where tikanga practices already occur amongst ICP members, whether different species or at different locations around Aotearoa. The identification of the 6-10 case study iwi partners will be guided by the ICP's consensus decision making approach that involves the collective membership considering the examples and confirming which ones would be the best fit for achieving the research aims. The team will use a thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews and explorative research questions to prompt narratives from the 6-10 case studies.

Research Resources:

The Iwi Collective Partnership will be the contract holders and managers for the project, with NWAaTT providing subcontract management and research capability and services.

The core research team will be allocated appropriate resources to undertake their research tasks as well as support in other forms from the NWAaTT office. The research resources available to the project team will include;

- access to the Unitec's full library service that includes online access to databases at other institutes and international journals
- support from a dedicated Māori librarian at the Unitec Library
- efficient online orders of PHD and Masters theses from other institutes via the library
- several hot desks and free Wifi on campus (Unitec)
- NWAaTT's offices and facilities (photocopier, printers, desks and IT gear)
- IT support, Zoom facilities and meeting rooms
- research administration support (.2 FTE)
- contracting and budget management support
- Masters student supervision

Specific roles and expertise of the project team

Irene Kereama-Royal (NWAaTT) - *project leader, ethics, interviewing, analysis, research, and writing, Masters supervision*

Irene (Ngāpuhi, Parehauraki, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto) is a senior researcher at NWAaTT and currently studying to complete her Ph.D. Irene has extensive experience in Māori land and aquaculture development and has held a number of senior positions in the science sector including AgResearch, Plant & Food (formerly HortResearch) TechNZ and the Foundation of Research Science & Technology. She was also appointed Registrar of the Waitangi Tribunal in 2008 and worked in the Māori Land Court in senior positions. For the past 5 years, Irene has held the position of Rangahau Māori Partner, collaborating across the Unitec in R&D projects with Māori.

Maru Samuels (ICP) - *project leader, facilitating engagement with the ICP members and interviewees, literature review, interviewing, analysis, research, and writing, Masters study*

Maru (Ngāi Te Rangi, Te Rarawa, NgaiTakoto) possesses a wealth of knowledge and experience in the New Zealand fishing industry and iwi Māori fisheries sector. For the past 15 years he has committed exclusively to the industry, helping to grow iwi Maori industry participation. Maru holds various industry roles, notably General Manager, Iwi Collective Partnership, chair of Nga Tapuwae o Maui deepwater fisheries collective of 41 iwi, and director of Te Ohu Kaimoana. While not critical to the project, Maru intends to complete a Masters Degree as part of the research project.

Eruera Lee-Morgan (Te Reo Māori Contractor) - *interviewing in te reo Māori, advising video edits, facilitating at report launch*

Eruera (Te Arawa / Pare Waikato Pare Hauraki) is researcher at NWAaTT as well as a Senior Advisor, Te Puni Kōkiri, Auckland Regional Office. Eruera Lee-Morgan is well known and highly respected for his expertise in te reo Māori. He has more than 22 years

of experience in the Māori language media industry, in particular, broadcasting in television and radio. For the last decade, he has held a number of key senior positions at Māori Television including Head of Te Reo programming, Executive Producer Te Reo, Head of Production as well as Programme Commissioner. Eruera has a breadth of knowledge in te ao Māori, and strong Māori networks across the country.

Research Administration (NWaTT) - project team administration

NWaTT has a pool of research administration staff who are experienced with administering research projects and working with project teams to achieve their milestones and research outputs. A research administrator will be appointed from this pool should the project proceed.

Research Advisors

Prof Jenny Lee Morgan (NWaTT) - Advisor, Kaupapa Māori research

Mere George (ICP) - Advisor, Iwi fisheries management, and commercial implementation

G. CONTRIBUTION TO BLUE ECONOMY IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

With numerous challenges, both current and emerging, facing fishing, and seafood / protein production in general, the ICP and its iwi membership have identified an opportunity to incorporate research within a 10-year review of its business strategy. The intention is to review and define tikanga Māori so that its application within the ICP business model is more explicit. Ultimately the approach will be summed up in a unique Māori Indigenous brand story that redefines ICP's purpose and approach, what **it stands for and how ICP uses tikanga to protect and nurture New Zealand's precious fisheries taonga for generations to come**. It is proposed that a truly authentic tikanga founded brand story will incentivise changes in behaviour and approach within and beyond the ICP's membership including to enhance the existing brands of ICP's commercial partners, and for ICP self-developed products in future, and will enhance ICP's reputation, trust worthiness, leadership and mana locally to the New Zealand public and Government.

ICP's unique contribution to research will occur through a scope confined to examples of tikanga application in fisheries within the ICP's iwi membership, benefiting from ICP's full supply chain business model.

Economic Value

- improvements to commercial fishing practices thereby supporting and enhancing the reputation, trust worthiness, leadership and mana of participants locally to the New Zealand public and Government, and globally, thereby enhancing brand value.
- movement away from the fragmented approach that has reduced New Zealand's ability to extract a premium for seafood products.
- development of a unique brand story that is distinctly Māori and indigenous.

Social & Cultural Well-being

- comprehensive transformative research in commercial fisheries and the evolution of an approach and brand founded on tikanga has never been attempted in Aotearoa to the comprehensive degree proposed. The benefits are uniquely Aotearoa although can be adopted and applied globally.
- ICP as a 100% iwi owned, governed and managed entity will own and lead this project, with co-development from iwi members, Te Ohu Kaimoana, ICP's commercial fishing partners & industry, government agencies, and in collaboration with other related research projects.
- research that has meaning for ICP and iwi members empowering a conscious realignment of their business and their practices of commercial fishing with iwi Māori social, cultural and ecological imperatives.

Ecological Well-being

- tikanga solutions to commercial fishing's biggest challenges such as bycatch, waste, under-utilisation, protected species, harvest levels, bottom-trawling and cross sector use with recreational and customary non-commercial.

H. BENEFITS AND CONNECTIONS TO IWI, HAPŪ AND MĀORI ORGANISATIONS

ICP will benefit directly from this research project having designed the original research idea and housing the research entirely within its business model. While ICP has contributed to numerous Sustainable Seas research projects, this is the first time that ICP has co-led a research proposal. It signals a new business approach based on a research evidenced ICP business model.

All 18+ ICP iwi members will be able to contribute to the research proposal and will benefit directly from the outcomes of the research. The research benefits will be shared collectively via the ICP but will also flow to the individual 18+ iwi and to their

respective whakapapa connections throughout the North Island. ICP's iwi membership are spread throughout the North Island with concentrations in the Bay of Plenty / Central North Island, Te Tairāwhiti, Taranaki / Whanganui, and Te Tai Tokerau.

One of ICP's commercial policies involves partnering with reputable fishing companies that are iwi owned. This achieves two benefits. Firstly, it stops unnecessary competition between the same iwi fishing interests that are connected by whakapapa, and it enhances iwi revenues in the form of improved ACE returns, and improved shareholder dividends from iwi as shareholder owners of the fishing companies. The same policy also increases ICP's influence over its fishing partners given its position as ACE supplier and through its iwi memberships' shareholder owner influence. ICP's intention is not to use its brand story to compete with the established brands of commercial fishing partners but to support and enhance those brands.

As a project partner, Te Ohu Kaimoana, brings a tremendous wealth of knowledge and experience in iwi Māori fisheries policy and practice. Their participation also provides a connection and sharing point to the other 38 iwi fishing companies nationally. A Te Ohu Kaimoana representative will form part of the research project team. It is envisaged that ICP will be in a position to present its research proposal to the 2021 or 2022 national Māori fisheries conference.

In terms of the project research team, both the Leader and Co-leader whakapapa to ICP iwi.

List of ICP Iwi

Shareholding iwi members:

1. Ngāti Porou
2. Te Arawa
3. Ngāti Tūwharetoa
4. Ngāi Te Rangī
5. Ngāti Awa
6. Whakatohea
7. Te Rarawa
8. Taranaki Iwi
9. Ngāti Ruanui
10. Ngaa Rauru Kīitahi
11. Te Aitanga ā Māhaki
12. Rongowhakaata
13. Ngaitai
14. Ngāti Manawa
15. Ngāti Whare
16. Rangitāne
17. Ngāti Maru (Taranaki)
18. Tapuika

Associate iwi:

1. Ngāi Tāmanuhiri

I. COMMUNICATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

With support of mana whenua Ngāti Tūwharetoa, the ICP will host a research project launch at their upcoming 10th birthday celebration to be held in Taupō on 11 December 2020 where ICP members and communities will hear about the project's objectives and anticipate its results once completed.

During the research contract term, the research team will provide regular progress summaries on key milestones of the project to the funder and to ICP Board and iwi members for their information and dissemination to their communities through their internal communications platforms and releases.

The project results will be professionally prepared by internal communications specialists at Unitec and communicated in targeted releases across the existing ICP and NWAaTT communication platforms including social media, NWAaTT's website, the Unitec's weekly and monthly newsletters and through Radio Waatea News (in te reo Māori). The project team will also utilise the Challenge communications capability where appropriate, including making information, outputs and updates available through the Sustainable Seas website and social media channels.

Video outputs will be made available generally or to specific audiences depending on content and consent considerations.

On completion of the project, NWAaTT will facilitate a formal report launch to disseminate the report inviting the wider research community and co-hosting the project partner members and their communities who contributed to the research compilation.

Public promotion via Māori media will also be prepared at this time focusing on the significance of this research contribution to Māori communities, the Maori fisheries industry and the wider New Zealand fishing industry. Copies of research reports are kept on site at NWaTT for indigenous groups and their communities who often visit or are seeking collaborators from Aotearoa for their research projects. NWaTT have fostered several indigenous research relationships as a result of our work with the homelessness and housing kaupapa.

J. CO-FUNDING (Source and amount)

ICP will contribute a minimum of \$81,500 co-funding towards this project, consisting primarily of time allocation for General Manager (Maru Samuels) in the form of project management and research contribution, and to the cost of hui and wānanga to support ICP iwi members' participation in the research:

- 0.2 FTE for an ICP staff member to undertake project management and research activities (60,000)
- to provide for various operating costs associated with the research projects (21,500)

Further detail of these allocations can be found in the budget attached separately to this proposal.

Exclusions

The following costs have been excluded from co-funding, in-kind calculations:

- In-kind time contributions of individual ICP iwi member representatives to interviews and wānanga,
- Project governance by ICP Board and oversight by a Project Advisory Committee, and
- Any co-partner in-kind contributions.
- Contributions towards a Masters student's enrolment in a Masters program.

K. RISK & MITIGATION

The risks to the project will likely be linked to Covid restrictions and our ability to travel within various regions of New Zealand to access the areas where interviews are likely to take place.

Should this occur, the project team will conduct the research through online interviews and the use of other technologies to record video, photo images and kōrero. The project team will also look to utilise the weeks/months between various lockdowns to complete interviews and video recordings. The manaakitanga practices that would normally occur with face to face interviews will be discussed with the ICP members to ensure there are appropriate strategies in place to compensate for the physical distance that occurs in an online forum.

The IP within the project will remain with the ICP consistent with the funding requirements, to be written into the funding contract as well as the ethics application for this project.

L. CONSENTS & APPROVAL required to undertake research

The project team expects to submit an ethics application for research with the Unitec Institute of Technology's Ethics Research Committee should the project be approved for funding with the Blue Economy IF. The Research Ethics Committee meets monthly and can deliver timely feedback for a newly funded project. The project leader has met with one of the committee members to advise of the pending application to the Blue Economy IF and the proposed timelines of approval. If the proposal is accepted for funding by the BE Fund approval committee, the project team intends to submit an ethics application immediately in November 2020. There is no expectation that the project will not receive approval from the ethics committee as similar projects submitted by the Ngā Wai A Te Tūi Research Centre have proposed similar interview techniques and research methods i.e. kaupapa Māori research, in several of its previous research projects.