

Call for Expressions of Interest: Industry-led spearhead project development

Science for Technological Innovation (SfTI) NSC

Spearhead projects are intended to deliver specific innovative technologies to help achieve the SfTI mission of enhancing New Zealand's capacity to use physical and engineering sciences for economic growth. They should be mission-led and bring New Zealand-wide teams together to have a broad impact on NZ's technology ecosystem, including capacity development activities.

For this round, we asked industry leaders to put forward, discuss and agree some key directions for New Zealand's high-tech future.

Researchers are now invited to express interest in bringing together or joining a New Zealand-wide research team to address these key research directions.

The eventual project funding level will be the order of \$1m per annum per project for two years, and at least two projects will be funded.

Initially, we will fund team travel and workshop costs for potential team members to meet, develop project plans, form a functioning team, and develop a formal proposal.

At least one project will be Māori-led and focused and will be guided by the SfTI Kāhui Māori along with Māori enterprise leaders. Regardless, all project proposals should make every endeavour to address Vision Mātauranga and to engage the SfTI Kāhui Māori advisors for assistance.

The timeframe is tight; all funding should be contracted by 30 June 2017 with projects starting by 1 July 2017, and ending by 30 June 2019.

Background

Six high level research directions were developed in three workshops in 2017 – a Māori ICT hui on 20 February, a Māori business leaders' high tech summit on 28 February, and an industry-led workshop on 28 March.

Four of the six directions are being carried forward for SfTI. The background is described in a) a report on the status of the research in New Zealand related to each direction, and b) in a context report – both of which are available on the SfTI website.

Call for Expressions of Interest

This is a call for research leaders and teams to come together and show an expression of interest in developing both a proposal and the best multi-institutional, multidisciplinary New Zealand team to address one of the four research directions, together with industry leaders.

The key points that should be addressed in the eventual full proposal are:

1. Context (both NZ and international)
2. Vision and what success looks like
3. Value proposition
4. Key SfTI themes and portfolios involved
5. Project summary
6. Team members (initially potential leaders and key members)
7. Current state
8. Science questions and stretch
9. How the project addresses Vision Mātauranga and the extent to which Māori leadership and approach is 'mission critical'
10. The capacity development opportunities and plans.

Directions

The Industry-led spearhead project directions document outlines information about each broad direction, and researchers are now invited to express an interest in forming a team, or in being part of a team, to meet and propose a programme of research work to address one of them.

The expression of interest should briefly summarise the following points using the supplied template:

1. The key points above (maximum 1 page).
2. The team leader and initial proposed team members (maximum half a page) OR researchers with relevant expertise who wish to join a team led by others. Our goal is for a multi-institutional, multi-disciplinary team. (Note that the SfTI management team may suggest others to join any team).
3. The process by which the team will come together to create the research proposal, including a plan of activities with dates, outcomes and who will be involved (as a table of activities, maximum half a page). In the case of researchers wanting to join another team, this section can briefly express the researchers' willingness to travel and be part of a larger team.
4. A high-level itemised budget for the travel and workshop costs of the proposed team members (maximum half a page).

5. Tell us about other work you are involved with that is related, including SfTI projects (maximum half a page)

Eligibility Criteria

1. New Zealand-based research organisations with research capability relevant to the mission, objectives, scope and research domains of the Science for Technological Innovation Challenge.
2. The project (or a close variation or part of the project) cannot be already funded by MBIE or another funding agency and any parallel application(s) must be declared in the proposal.
3. Named researchers already contracted to SfTI spearhead research projects are normally not eligible to submit a proposal, receive new spearhead funding, or be named as a member of a new spearhead project team. However, for this round, the SfTI directors will consider making an exception, on an individual case-by-case basis, where there is a strong argument for such an existing SfTI researcher to be included in the best New Zealand team.
4. If named researchers are involved with a SfTI seed project, the seed project must be related to the spearhead proposal and the relationship, and how the seed project will be coordinated with the spearhead, must be clearly described. In particular, it should be explained how there will be no duplicated funding of activities.

Assessment process

The expressions of interest will be evaluated by the SfTI management team and a panel of selected industry leaders from the industry workshop. Successful submitters will then be invited to start working on proposals.

Key dates

Timeline	Key Dates
Call for EIOs released	21 April 2017
EOI applications close	COB 2 May 2017
Team's notified of EOI results; teams start working on proposals	8 May 2017
Full Spearhead Proposals Close	5 June 2017
Successful applicants notified	15 June 2017
Projects start	As soon as possible from 1 July 2017
Contract completion date	30 June 2019