

RESEARCH FUNDING EXPECTATIONS POLICY

This policy outlines the expectations that researchers can have of Toka Tū Ake EQC (Earthquake Commission) research funding, and that our staff can have of the research we support.

1.0 Introduction

Toka Tū Ake EQC, a New Zealand crown entity, has a research and education mandate under the current Earthquake Commission Act 1993. This role has been further defined under the new Natural Hazards Insurance Bill, that will soon replace the Earthquake Commission Act 1993, under Clause 126 (e) Function of Commission that states we are to facilitate research and education, and to contribute to the sharing of information, knowledge, and expertise.

We are a strategic research funding agency of New Zealand, primarily funded from New Zealand house insurance levies. We are an active partner, thought leader and strong research advocate contributing to our natural hazard knowledge, to generate useful outcomes and benefits for all New Zealanders. We strive to understand the role, influence and impact research can have in order that we can stay up-to-date and informed on issues related to New Zealand's resilience to natural hazards. This means establishing a supportive and respectful relationship that goes well beyond the life of a research funding agreement. We understand that the path to uptake and impact of research can be long and complicated, and this is why Toka Tū Ake EQC is committed to engaging and supporting research whilst maintaining a connected, agile and flexible funding approach, to ensure the research it funds is useable, useful, and used.

This policy is a reference to what researchers and Toka Tū Ake EQC can expect from the relationship, and guidance around what Toka Tū Ake EQC funding can be used for. Many of the items here are also outlined in the Terms and Conditions of our funding contracts.

Some of this guidance may contradict existing arrangements or contracts. If you have an existing agreement with Toka Tū Ake EQC dating pre-May 2021 then, please refer to your contract's terms and conditions. For any arrangements contracted post-May 2021 then this information is valid and will be reflected in the contract where appropriate. Some ongoing contracts will be updated at the time of renewal or via a request for variation of the contract.

Our Research Strategy and Investment Priorities

Our research portfolio is guided by our [Resilience Strategy for Natural Hazard Risk Reduction \(2019 – 2029\)](#) and [Research Investment Priorities Statement](#). Research funding is asked to address our five areas of research interest (Research Themes): *Empowering People, Resilient Buildings, Smarter Land-Use, Governance and Economics, and Quantifying Hazards and Impacts*. Benefits to New Zealand and authentic consideration of Vision Mātauranga are also very important elements that Toka Tū Ake EQC considers in conjunction with our priorities when choosing research projects for funding.

2.0 Relationship Expectations

2.1 Research collaborations

Toka Tū Ake EQC anticipates its collaborations with researchers will go beyond the life of the contract itself and the research obligations of the contract. Our staff work with researchers to ensure that the research outputs reach their intended audience and that the research is used to improve New Zealand’s resilience to natural hazards.

Toka Tū Ake also works to provide support and opportunities for researchers to upskill, especially in the areas of science communication, to ensure effective translation of science to policy and/or practice. Principal investigators and other appropriate researchers who are funded by Toka Tū Ake EQC will be invited and encouraged to attend science communication or science to policy/practice workshops when they are available (approximately three times a year). These workshops are designed to support researchers in developing communication skills to assist in talking with decision makers and the media.

These science communication workshops aim to provide guidance on how to create an effective communication and engagement plan, managing media and preparing communication materials. They have also provided researchers with an introduction to policy and the policy cycle and have helped researchers to forge strong relationships to enable science that is needs-led and effectively used.

Toka Tū Ake EQC works with other New Zealand research programmes to aggregate and combine certain research activities for maximum benefit, and then translate these activities to get the outcomes required and impact needed. We know that sometimes research has more impact when it is presented or combined with other relevant research and so we may ask researchers to work with us and other groups so that new knowledge, data and experience can be shared to generate greater impact.

Research partnerships are also vital to Toka Tū Ake EQC focus on building resilience to natural hazards here in New Zealand. We have established strong relationships with research suppliers through ongoing projects (e.g. GeoNet, DEVORA, It’s Our Fault, Universities through our University Research Programmes, Biennials grants and postgraduate sponsorships, QuakeCoRE and numerous NZ Societies through annual conference and workshop sponsorships, as well as councils, government agencies and engineering consultancies seeking our support on highly focussed research projects .

2.2 No surprises approach

Toka Tū Ake EQC is a Crown entity and reports to a board and Minister who expect to be informed of all activities that will generate public interest or have an impact on the work that we are doing. This is the reason we expect a “no surprises” approach with all our suppliers, including the researchers we support and fund. It is important for researchers to provide early notification to Toka Tū Ake EQC of any upcoming publications, media or public activities that could result in enquiries by media or public officials to Toka Tū Ake EQC. If a researcher is unsure about whether something to be published will be of media interest, please contact research@eqc.govt.nz as early as possible to seek advice. We can often support researchers and their institution, to get the research heard by the right people in a helpful way. We can do this by writing briefings or updates for Ministers, drafting papers for our Board, or press releases for the media. We can also work with other government departments and agencies to provide consistent messaging and coordinate the response to generate a positive impact.

2.3 Media and promotion of research

Toka Tū Ake EQC actively wants to promote the research that it invests in because we believe it can make a difference to the resilience of New Zealand. It is strategically important for research outputs to be easily accessible and ultimately put into the hands and minds of those who can influence change. Researchers can expect us to work with them in the promotion of their research. We encourage research promotion to a range of audiences, which includes the public through media.

To support this, Toka Tū Ake EQC research agreements outline our social media expectations per funded year of a research project, and how to best collaborate on media engagement (see more in 2.4). If researchers require more guidance on the effective use of social media, this will be provided in the science communication workshops (mentioned in 2.1) or found at the Science Media Centre or Science Communication Association of New Zealand.

2.4 Communication and stakeholder engagement

Toka Tū Ake EQC supports researchers in stakeholder engagement at all stages of a project. Early stakeholder engagement and clear communication of research outputs to targeted audiences, typically results in more effective uptake and impact of Toka Tū Ake EQC research.

To support this effort, researchers are asked to collaborate with us on at least one communication/stakeholder engagement activity each year of their project. There are a wide range of activities that are appropriate for various stages of research, such as: media releases, video stories, presentations to a lay audience, presentations to Toka Tū Ake EQC Staff, or workshops with end-users. If a researcher is unsure about what activities are appropriate, they are encouraged to ask our Research team.

3.0 Reporting and Invoicing

3.1 Regular reports

Toka Tū Ake EQC research projects are contracted in a manner that stipulates regular reporting or activity milestones from the supplier, that are aligned with project payments. Payments are issued to the supplier upon approval by Toka Tū Ake EQC of a satisfactory progress, activity or final report. In general, these reports or activities (e.g. a Steering group meeting, presentation to Toka Tū Ake EQC staff) will cover progress of research against milestones, financial status (if required), updates on any risks realised or disruption to the project, any new partnerships or engagement activity.

The frequency and form of reports depends on the type of funding received but will mostly likely be at a quarterly, 6-monthly, or annual basis. Please refer to the [EQC Research Reporting Guidelines](#) for more information. These guidelines are updated annually.

3.2 Final reports

Toka Tū Ake EQC expects a final report upon completion of a research grant, such as the Biennial Grants or University Programme. This final report should provide an in-depth analysis and insight into the outputs of the research. The final report or portions of it will be made publicly available on our website.

We typically place a value of 10% or more of the grant's total value on this final report, which is paid upon approval by Toka Tū Ake EQC.

3.3 Publications

Toka Tū Ake EQC expects to receive a copy of every publication related to the research we support and/or fund, this includes articles published in peer-reviewed journals or in conference proceedings, posters, technical reports, or guidance. We are interested in the outputs of research, such as these, even after the funding for the research has finished. Toka Tū Ake EQC is not just a funder but an end-user of the research it funds and therefore is always interested in the outputs of our research investments. Please email them to Research@eqc.govt.nz as soon as they are available.

3.4 Invoicing

Host organisations (also referred to as “Suppliers”) are required to invoice Toka Tū Ake EQC (at EQCInvoices@eqc.govt.nz) regularly for funds related to the research project. These timings will be stipulated in the contract but will be no less regular than every 6 months. Infrequent invoicing or leaving invoicing to the end of the project makes it hard for Toka Tū Ake EQC to manage our finances and forecast budgets for research funding. Our financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June, so it is important we receive all invoices due by the end of June no later than the first week of June.

4.0 Use of Toka Tū Ake EQC funds

4.1 General Expenses

Toka Tū Ake EQC expects the grant to be used by the researcher/host institution (also referred to as Supplier) for the sole purpose of undertaking the project as described in the formal agreement, and not for any other activities.

The researcher and host institution/supplier are responsible for monitoring the expenditure throughout the period of the project. Toka Tū Ake EQC is not responsible for budget overruns unless prior written approval has been made, and we are under no obligation to approve or provide additional or future funding for any project. If a project requires additional funding in order to complete its contracted obligations, it is the responsibility of the researcher, in conjunction with their organisation, to inform Toka Tū Ake EQC as soon as possible to make new arrangements or formal changes to their project’s agreement.

4.2 Overheads

Overhead costs can be included in a budget seeking Toka Tū Ake EQC funding for Biennial grants and negotiated grants only; University Research Programmes are not eligible to apply for overhead expenses Applicants are encouraged wherever possible to secure co-funding through a discount or waiver of overhead costs. If overhead costs do need to be included, Toka Tū Ake EQC expects overheads to be equivalent to no more than 30% of the cost of staff time allocated to the project

Please note, all existing contracted arrangements will be honoured but all future contracts will be aligned with this policy unless a prior arrangement has been made for exceptional circumstances.

4.3 Salaries

Toka Tū Ake EQC funding can be used to contribute towards staff time but the limit on overheads (see [Overheads](#)) should be considered. Our research funding should not be used to cover full salaries of researchers, as these

should be subsidised by their organisation. Postdoctoral Fellows are treated as staff members in our research agreements, not students.

4.4 Funding for students, research assistants and summer scholars

Our research funding can be used to cover post-graduate student costs, salaries of research assistants and summer scholarships. However, this should not be the entire use of a project's budget considering students require qualified supervision to produce the high-quality research outputs expected by Toka Tū Ake EQC.

Funding for students can include their stipend and enrolment related costs, especially where they are relevant to the project, such as thesis papers or course work related to skills required to do the research.

4.5 Initial project costs

Normally, the first payment released to a research project is calculated to be up to 25% the project's total project value. However, if required, Toka Tū Ake EQC can negotiate the initial payment amount made on a grant to help cover costs that are anticipated to occur early in the life of a project. These costs are often related to high set-up and commencement costs of particular projects. Toka Tū Ake EQC may request additional information to demonstrate that the costs are reasonable and expected.

4.6 Travel to conferences

Toka Tū Ake EQC research grants do not include a component for attendance at or travel to conferences as part of a standard research project. Unless this Agreement states otherwise, any expenditure in this regard is to be applied for separately. Instead, we have a small additional fund for this purpose and discretionary consideration will be given to supporting conference attendance if the researcher is presenting a paper or leading a workshop on the project matter being funded by Toka Tū Ake EQC.

For clarity, any necessary travel related to a research project, including flights and accommodation, can be requested in the research proposal's budget spreadsheet, and included as part of the total research project's budget for approval.

4.7 Capital

EQC funding can be used for some capital costs. While capital equipment is the responsibility of the applicant's institution, exceptional requests for Toka Tū Ake EQC funding for capital equipment should be explained and justified in the budget.

Materials and apparatus purchased with research grant monies should be used exclusively for activities related to the funded project during its duration unless the impact of its use for other purposes is immaterial to the progress and quality of the project.

4.8 Conference and Event Sponsorship

Our research funding can be used to sponsor events like workshops and conferences relevant to New Zealand's natural hazards, including improving our resilience to them. We typically fund up to \$10,000 per event, however depending on the expected participation and impact, this amount can be increased to \$15,000 per event. In return for our sponsorship, Toka Tū Ake EQC will negotiate acknowledgement of our brand at the event, including on the event website and proceedings, a booth for engagement purposes, a speaker position, free registrations for

up Toka Tū Ake staff to attend if appropriate, and a brief summary report post event describing the attendance rate, benefits, outcomes and challenges of the event.

5.0 Extensions and Variations

5.1 Extensions and Variations

Toka Tū Ake EQC will consider extensions and variations to research project agreements on a case-by-case basis. We require you to complete a [Variation Request Form](#) that briefly explains the change/s requested and why. These requests should be submitted as soon as possible because they take at least 2-3 weeks to process.

The decision will be based on the following:

- the case presented – what is the variation, why is it required, and any impacts
- any previously granted variations and extensions (both current grant and any previous grants)
- the capacity of Toka Tū Ake EQC research portfolio to accommodate the changes

We will try to accommodate these variation requests as much as possible, but we are under no obligation to accept an application for extension or vary a contract. This decision is at the discretion of Toka Tū Ake EQC only.

6.0 Ethics and Scientific Conduct

6.1 Ethics

If research that Toka Tū Ake EQC funds includes human participants, we expect the participants of the research to be treated with respect and for researchers to abide by the ethics processes of their host organisation. Proposals to Toka Tū Ake EQC must clearly stipulate when social research activities are being conducted with human participants and the steps taken to ensure correct procedures and participant privacy is maintained.

Researchers should consider the following guidelines and standards as part of their research plan:

[Royal Society Code of Professional Standards and Ethics](#)

[Te Ara Tika Guidelines for Maori Research Ethics](#)

[Ethical Guidelines for Post-disaster Research](#) - particularly important for scientists researching responses to natural hazard events.

6.2 Private Data

Research may include working with private or confidential information/data. Toka Tū Ake EQC expects that confidential data will remain secure and only anonymised or aggregate data is disseminated publicly. This is the responsibility of the researchers and their host organisations.

6.3 Toka Tū Ake EQC Data

If researchers required data from Toka Tū Ake EQC there is a standard process for all requests. This process includes a data sharing request that will be filled out by a Toka Tū Ake EQC employee and presented to the Toka Tū Ake EQC Data and Information Governance Forum for approval. There may also be additional requirements

depending on the nature of the data required, such as, signing a data sharing agreement or filling in an information security questionnaire to ensure the proper controls are in place for storing private data.

Depending on the data requested this process may take a while (a minimum of 2 weeks) and this timeframe should be considered as part of the research plan. Toka Tū Ake EQC takes information security very seriously considering the sensitive data it holds. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

7.0 Usability of Research Outputs

7.1 Intellectual Property

In brief (and described in detail under the Terms and Conditions of our Standard Research Agreement), all new IP arising from, or developed during the course of a research project, remains with the Researcher and/or Host Institution (sometimes referred to as “Supplier”; depending on arrangements between those two parties). In return for project funding, we (Toka Tū Ake EQC) request an unrestricted, perpetual, non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty free, irrevocable licence to use the results of that Project (including but not restricted to the final report and any product developed in conjunction with the Project). This licence provided here should continue to be valid and in effect beyond the completion date or beyond the termination of this project.

We also seek to publish and distribute the Project reports and findings, and any other information relating to the Project, without charge, in any form and through any medium (including our website, internal networks and communications) subject only to the approval of the Researcher/Host Institution. There is an obligation by the Researcher/Host Institution to provide one copy to us of all documentation including reports, conference presentations, guidance and any other papers at the time it is completed or due.

The Researcher/Host Institution is expected to acknowledge the research grant awarded by Toka Tū Ake EQC in any report, article or any other publication arising directly from the Project, in the form “*A study [part] funded by Toka Tū Ake EQC, the Earthquake Commission*”.

The Researcher/Host Institution is also expected to advise us in advance of any media activity or publicity regarding the Project (i.e. ensuring a “no surprises approach”), as well as advise the media or interested parties of our funding for the Project.

Please note: If a project is contracted using our Services Agreement, all pre-existing Intellectual Property Rights remain the property of their owner, whilst all new Intellectual Property Rights in the Deliverables become the property of the Buyer (Toka Tū Ake EQC). The Supplier grants to us a perpetual, non-exclusive, worldwide, transferable, sub-licensable and royalty-free licence to use, for any purpose, all Intellectual Property Rights in the Deliverables that are not owned by the Buyer to a) receive the full benefit of the Services and Deliverables, and b) use, copy, modify and distribute the Deliverables. Please refer to the Terms and Conditions of our Services Agreement for more information.

7.2 Acknowledgement

Researchers should acknowledge the funding received by Toka Tū Ake EQC in every final report, article, publication or presentation that arises from their project. They should also advise the media, or any interested parties of the funding support received by Toka Tū Ake EQC for the project.

7.2 Open access publications

Toka Tū Ake EQC encourages open-access publishing with complying journals. We expect researchers to consider this in their original proposal budget and include related publication expenses in their budget costs. For existing funding arrangements please contact us if you require additional support for open-access fees. Exceptions can be made, for example if there are no suitable open-access journals or the researcher is aiming for high impact journals such as, Nature Geoscience.

As stated in our Research Reporting Guidelines, if an open access, peer reviewed paper has been published in an established journal and meets these criteria, it will be accepted in lieu of a separate final report provided it is accompanied by a brief summary report with a link or identifiable reference (such as a DOI) to the relevant publication/s.

7.3 Open access data and tools

All data collected and/or managed using Toka Tu Ake EQC funding should adhere to NZ Government Data and Information Management Principles, FAIR and CARE principles, where appropriate (see [section on Ethics and Scientific Conduct](#)). Where necessary data access may be managed via registration but should be available to all users in some form without cost.

We support open data as it acknowledges that we work in the system that operates most effectively when data is findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable. This ensures effective decision making for risk management.

These principles extend to tools used to access and visualise data.

8.0 Information Sharing

8.1 NZRIS

The New Zealand Research Information System¹ (NZRIS) is a database and online hub of information about research, science, and innovation in New Zealand. It is the system which is established by government directive outlined in the Research, Science, and Innovation (RSI) domain plan for organisations that are distributing, receiving, or utilising public funds to undertake RSI activities.

EQC intends to, and may be required to, provide RSI Data² to NZRIS to support the understanding of the government's investment in RSI activities. EQC expects researchers to assist EQC (where necessary) to comply with its obligations under NZRIS.

EQC is still working on what protection rules to apply to RSI Data, but researchers should expect to be informed and consent requested to share data prior to submission. Once these details are defined EQC will include the granting of consent as part of any new contracts.

¹ For additional information <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/science-and-innovation/research-and-data/nzris/>

² RSI Data means all data which EQC is required to provide to NZRIS which may include all information in relation to or arising under the funding contract including Key Persons, Proposal, Research Materials, Research Activity, Research Provider, Post Completion Reports, and New IP

8.2 OIA obligations

As a government entity, Toka Tū Ake EQC has obligations under the Official Information Act (OIA) to disclose information regarding its activities and the information it holds in accordance with the Act. If we receive an OIA request where the researcher or the research is subject to the OIA then Toka Tū Ake EQC expects the researcher to assist with the request as required.

8.3 Confidentiality

Toka Tū Ake EQC expects all information shared with Toka Tū Ake EQC related to the research activity may be made publicly available unless the researcher marks the information as confidential (see [section on Ethics and Scientific Conduct](#)). The likelihood of confidential information being produced from a research project should be declared in the original proposal, so Toka Tū Ake EQC Research Team can manage this project accordingly. All Parties to a contract will liaise, prior to releasing any confidential information, should any of them receive a request (or have an obligation) that includes the possible disclosure of information that another Party has identified as confidential.

9.0 Other

9.1 Health & Safety

Toka Tū Ake EQC expects all researchers and project team members to comply with their obligations under the HSW Act as it relates to, or affects, their Research Agreement with Toka Tū Ake EQC. This includes complying with all reasonable directions of Toka Tū Ake EQC relating to health, safety, and security, and reporting any of the following that applies to the Parties or the Researcher, or relates to or affects the Agreement:

- notifiable injury, illness, incident or event, or any notice issued under the HSW Act or any other health and safety legislation, and
- Protective Security Incident.

9.2 Toka Tū Ake EQC Contact Details

Email: Research@eqc.govt.nz

Address: PO Box 790
Wellington 6140

9.3 Code of Conduct

For all events sponsored by Toka Tū Ake EQC, we expect you to have and enforce an acceptable Code of Conduct, approved by us. A copy of this might be requested if required.

9.4 Project Delays

If the Researcher's work falls behind the schedule outlined in this Agreement (which may be updated from time to time), the Researcher must inform Toka Tū Ake EQC. If the delay is caused by factors within the Researcher's control, they must take practical measures to fix the delay.

9.5 Duty of Care

The Researcher and Host Institution shall exercise reasonable skill, care and diligence in all matters relating to the Project.

9.6 Governing Law and Currency

This Agreement will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of New Zealand, and each Party submits to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of New Zealand. Any references to dollars are references to New Zealand dollars unless otherwise stated.

9.7 No assignment

Our Research Agreements are designed to be specific to the individual Researcher and the Host Institution. Both the Researcher and the Host Institution are not allowed to give, sell, or delegate their rights or responsibilities in this Agreement to someone else without getting written permission in advance from Toka Tū Ake EQC.

9.8 Notices

Any requests, notifications, obligations, or approvals that are authorized or required by our funding agreement, or are related to this Agreement, must be communicated in written form. These written communications will be considered effective upon being received at the recipient's address, including email address.

9.10 Warranty/Indemnity

The Researcher and Host Institution guarantee that they will conduct the Project in a way that does not violate the intellectual property rights of anyone else. They also agree to compensate Toka Tū Ake EQC for any costs or legal liabilities that arise due to a breach of this guarantee. The compensation will be up to twice the total amount of the grant provided.