

Healthier Lives – He Oranga Hauora National Science Challenge

PHASE 2 INVESTMENT PROCESS

as at 15 February 2019

Our Vision, Te Kitenga

Our vision is of Aotearoa New Zealand with equitable health outcomes and a substantially reduced burden of non-communicable diseases.

Tō mātou kitenga kia noho a Aotearoa New Zealand hei whenua he ōrite ngā putanga hua hauora mō te tangata, kia iti iho hoki ngā pīkauranga o ngā māuiui kāore e taea te tuku ki te tangata kē (Ngā NCD)

1. Introduction

The MBIE Science Board confirmed Phase 2 funding of \$17.6m over five years for the Healthier Lives [2019-2024 research strategy](#).

This is an increase of \$4.3M on Phase 1 funding of \$13.3M. However, as the Challenge was operational for only three and half years in Phase 1 whereas Phase 2 funding will stretch over five years, this represents a slight decrease in the research funding available on an annual basis.

In Phase 2, with the addition of \$1M co-funding for a joint venture with the Heart Foundation of New Zealand, there is a total research budget of \$14.4M, with up to \$12.4M (or \$2.48M per annum) to invest across three strategic research themes:

- i. Healthy food and physical activity environments
- ii. Culturally engaged health interventions for Māori and Pacific Peoples
- iii. Precision medicine and personalised preventions

as well as \$0.5M to fund joint life course research with the other health and wellbeing Challenges (A Better Start and Ageing Well), \$0.5M for big data research and \$1M for strategic opportunities likely to emerge over the next few years. A further \$0.2M has been set aside to support economic evaluation of research.

Due to funding limits, it is expected that a small number of research projects (perhaps 1-3) will be commissioned within each theme, the lifespan of projects will be 2-4 years, and the average investment will be approximately \$0.5M per project per year.

All projects will be required to contribute to the Challenge's overarching mission to reduce the burden of non-communicable disease and increase equitable health outcomes. [Research Investment Guidelines](#) (PDF 373KB) will guide the selection of projects, and projects will be contracted to deliver outcomes in line with these guidelines.

2. Investment Process

The MBIE Science Board advised Healthier Lives to ensure that research commissioning processes in the second period of funding ‘build focus’. They encouraged the Challenge to ‘seize opportunities to take more leadership in setting priorities for research funding’.

The majority of Healthier Lives Phase 2 research investments will therefore involve a process of research prioritisation, negotiation and commissioning (rather than a traditional contestable process). However, some funding will be advertised via an open call for applications, including co-funding with partners who have the capacity to run a contestable funding round.

Phase 2 investment will build on what we have learned during Phase 1, including the value of co-designing research with community and clinical partners, engaging with stakeholders and partners to implement research findings, and harnessing the power of big data to answer important research questions. The focus on economic evaluation will become sharper in Phase 2.

Some promising research initiated during the first phase will continue in the next phase. However, existing projects will not be automatically rolled over – there will be an appropriate process of co-creation and critique, including review by the Healthier Lives International Science Advisory Panel (ISAP).

Some new areas of research will be developed. Preliminary work will be undertaken to gain an understanding of the existing research landscape and capability, and to scope and prioritise research that best aligns with the Challenge’s objective.

Funding decisions will be made jointly by the Healthier Lives Governance Group and Kāhui Māori, except in joint funding ventures, where decision-making authority may be delegated to the Assessing Committee. The investment process will be slightly different for each research theme.