# 2019 PBRF Review Panel - Submission Template for Sector Consultation

## Introduction

The purpose of the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) is to ensure that excellent research in the tertiary education sector is encouraged and rewarded.

The PBRF is periodically reviewed. The 2019 Review is being undertaken by an independent review panel. Its aim is to examine ways government can continue to support research excellence by improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the PBRF settings and to ensure the benefits of this research are shared across New Zealand.

Any changes to the PBRF will take into account the nature of the existing research culture within the tertiary education setting, and the government’s priorities for New Zealand’s research and innovation system and tertiary education system.

## Submissions

The [Terms of Reference for the Review](https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Further-education/Policies-and-strategies/Performance-based-research-fund/Terms-of-Reference-for-the-2019-Review-of-the-Performance-Based-Research-Fund.pdf) set out the matters that the panel has been asked to consider as part of their review. The PBRF Review Panel invites submissions on these matters to inform the review process. Please refer to the Terms of Reference for more context about the questions the panel has posed.

Submissions are invited from any individual or group with an interest or insights into how the PBRF settings can be improved.

The submissions will be considered by the independent PBRF Review Panel as part of the deliberations that will culminate in their report.

The panel has prepared a series of questions to help guide submitters.

## Revisiting the objectives of the PBRF

The panel has been asked to consider whether the current objectives need to be further modified to ensure the PBRF meets current and future challenges and priorities in the research system and in the research-led teaching environment.

Please refer to page two of the terms of reference for the seven objectives of the PBRF.

1. What do you think are the current and future opportunities, priorities and challenges for the research system and research-led teaching environment?
2. Do think that the current objectives of the PBRF need to be modified in light of these opportunities, priorities and challenges? If so, please tell us what changes you would prefer and why.

## Improving research collaboration and engagement with end-users

The panel has been asked to examine the merits of moving from an individual-based assessment to a group-based assessment, in terms of boosting collaboration, supporting workforce development and sustainability, and reducing compliance costs.

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current individual-based assessment?
2. If you think that the individual-based assessment should be retained, please tell us if you think there should be any changes to the PBRF settings to enhance the advantages and mitigate the disadvantages that you identify?
3. What advantages and disadvantages do you see as resulting from changing to a group-based assessment?
4. If you support a change to group-based assessment, please tell us how you think such assessments should be conducted to maximise the potential benefits.

We welcome submissions that define the ‘group’ that would be assessed, how participants would be selected, and how that assessment would occur.

## Boosting the impact of tertiary education research

The panel has been asked to examine options for improving the assessment and rewards for research that has tangible impacts for communities, the environment, businesses or government sectors.

1. How could the PBRF be changed to assess and reward impact? What would the costs and benefits of these changes be?
2. If the individual is retained as the unit of assessment, what options do you see to change the PBRF to allow for the assessment of impact?
3. Using the group as the unit of assessment may have the potential to promote collaboration with end-users and be a more appropriate unit to assess impact. How should a group-based assessment be organised to measure:
   1. the support provided by organisations to enable collaboration, outreach activities, dissemination and engagement; and
   2. the collective impact of teams, units or your preferred groups of researchers?

## Assessing excellent research with lower transaction costs

The panel has been asked to identify options for modifying the current PBRF settings to reduce transaction costs for research staff, tertiary organisations and government while still meeting the objectives for the fund.

1. Please outline how best to balance the dual goals of reducing transaction costs while meeting the overall objectives for the fund for each of the following options:
   1. Changing the unit of assessment
   2. Changing the frequency of the quality evaluation
   3. Using new or existing metrics to assess research quality
   4. Introducing self-assessment of research quality
   5. Adjusting the proportion of funding allocated across the three measures
2. What other options do you support, and why?

## Recognising and rewarding all types of research activity

The panel has been asked to consider how the PBRF can better support the research activity of all types of research, including basic, applied, creative, mātauranga Māori research, and Pacific or other cultural research perspectives.

1. How should the PBRF be changed to recognise better and reward basic, applied, creative, or other cultural research perspectives?
2. What specific changes are needed to better support mātauranga Māori research?
3. What specific changes are needed to better support Pacific research?
4. Do you think specific support should be provided to some organisations? How would this work?
5. Do you think that a separate funding mechanism for particular types of research activity or building research capacity and capability is desirable? How would this work?

## Sustainable and diverse workforce with investigator-led research capability

The panel has been asked to examine how the PBRF contributes to a sustainable and diverse workforce and interacts with the changing nature of work.

The terms of reference refer to categories of staff who may be disadvantaged by the current settings. We encourage submitters to consider what incentives and disincentives might arise and whether any adjustments might be warranted.

1. Does the PBRF contribute to a sustainable and diverse workforce? Tell us why or why not.
2. What changes should be made to the PBRF to ensure that Māori researchers and wānanga are supported to participate?
3. What other changes should be made to the PBRF to support a sustainable pipeline across the tertiary research workforce?
4. What incentives or disincentives does the PBRF create within tertiary education organisations in relation to the changing nature of work? How should the PBRF be changed to prepare for these changes?

## Other comments

1. What other comments or suggestions do you have about how we could improve the PBRF?

## How to submit

Please send your submission to [PBRF.Review2019@education.govt.nz](mailto:PBRF.Review2019@education.govt.nz)