

Regional Events Fund

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment Regional Events Fund (REF) purpose is to stimulate 'out of region' visitation through funding events that will encourage expenditure missed by international visitor markets.

The Tourism Recovery Minister allocated funding to the RTOs (Regional Tourism Organisations) via each IMA (International Marketing Alliance) as determined by Tourism New Zealand. In our case Nelson Tasman and Marlborough, based on their respective share of the international visitor spend prior to COVID-19 were allocated \$1.5m. The REF criteria were adhered to and the Nelson Tasman and Marlborough IMA developed an investment plan to set out how the funding would be spent. The investment plan has a duration of 4.5 years.

Executive Summary

The Regional Events Fund (REF) in Te Taihū (Nelson Tasman and Marlborough) will build upon the established structures and strategic approach and serve to build long term capability and capacity into the events sector of Te Taihū.

The REF will drive visitation via multi-day events that also support and leverage local industry strengths and maximise existing competitive advantages for this region. The fund will be used to expand existing events and develop new opportunities.

In addition, the REF will serve to:

- Stimulate the economy
- Build excellence into event management
- Celebrate our community
- Align to the existing event strategies and functions we have in the regions and maximise and expand existing structures for efficiencies
- Minimise waste at events
- Allow Te Taihū to be specific about focussing on Business Events that drive economic value for the region

Recreational, Competitive and Business Events with these focus areas will be considered for support, particularly if they work together to create a 'total package' around a central theme for a multi-day event, leveraging off each other and generating a more attractive proposition for attendees.

We will measure the impact of the REF by ensuring each event organiser completes a post-event report including measurables such as attendee numbers and subjective feedback. Events will also be evaluated prior to funding approval using an Economic Impact Assessment model to determine the approximate return on investment to the region.

In addition, and to support this event development an accelerator programme will be implemented to empower event organisers, lift capability, and build sustainable legacy events.

The Funding Process

Events where the Te Taihū region has an existing competitive advantage will be the focus including Food & Beverage, Sporting, Aviation, Arts and Culture events. We will work also collaboratively with an aim to create an inter-regional event, for example, a food and beverage event series across the regions.

Successful event organisers who have already voiced an interest in scaling up their existing events and have demonstrated how this could be achieved will likely be supported in the first instance. Of particular interest is developing new business events to work alongside existing successful consumer events.

New events which demonstrate alignment to regional priorities and/or support local industries plus showcase the regions unique selling propositions will be assisted to develop their event concept through an accelerator programme with the first event to be scheduled within the following 2 years. All events will be required to be annual or biennial and scalable.

For more information, to apply for funding towards an event, or to discuss an event concept please contact

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