

# Requirements for PIJF non-incremental role applications

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## Overview

This document expands on the submission requirements for a full proposal application for non-incremental roles under the Public Interest Journalism Fund (PIJF).

The PIJF General Guidelines and round requirements state the following:

*In cases where loss of staff is demonstrably imminent, non-incremental roles may be funded. In this instance, applicants must be prepared to provide financial information (including potentially commercial sensitive information) on a confidential basis to be reviewed by an appropriate independent assessor.*

- *Please demonstrate what imminent risk there is to the current position/s \**
- *Please outline how the existing role/s link to measurable PIJF content creation.*

*\* Full financial information (including potentially commercial sensitive data) will be required only at the full proposal stage. It will be treated with confidentiality to be reviewed by an appropriate independent assessor*

The focus in the assessment process is showing that the loss of important PIJ role/s is “demonstrably imminent”. There are two key considerations here:

1. **Important PIJ role:** The role contributes significantly to PIJ, and its loss will impact audiences
2. **Demonstrably imminent:** Financial necessity will require you to cut the role in the near future

For the second plank, “imminent” will be taken to mean **within 6 months** of the application submission.

Note that even where loss of important PIJ roles is “demonstrably imminent”, funding does not necessarily follow. All other criteria of contestable funding assessment apply, and we will make the final decision based on all PIJF assessment criteria and in the context of other applications received.

Note also that we make decisions based on information supplied by applicants. The onus is on the applicant to show the case for non-incremental funding.

As indicated by the requirements detailed in this document, applications for non-incremental funding must be made for specific roles. This precludes applications for general newsroom staffing costs across regions.

## Definition of “non-incremental”

A “non-incremental role” is a job that currently exists.

Non-incremental role applications concern existing roles, or roles vacated or made redundant within the 6 months prior to application. Note that if a role or very similar roles have been made redundant within the period, incremental applications will not be accepted and should be non-incremental applications, in which case all the requirements of this document apply.

The term “non-incremental” role is used in the context of the PIJF because in general, funding goes towards the creation of new (“incremental”) jobs or content. Non-incremental roles are therefore an exception to standard fund operation and require a high level of proposal detail.

## Required elements of a full proposal for non-incremental roles

### **Description of the existing role/s**

- Brief functional description
- Content output of the existing role/s and how it meets the PIJF definition of PIJ (pages 2 - 3 of the [General Guidelines](#)).

### **Demonstration of potential PIJ void**

- Overview of the competitive environment relevant to roles sought
- Considerations of loss of diversity of voice

**Financial records** with costs and revenue for relevant editorial divisions, showing trends by year over at least five years.

- Include explanations of past cost-saving measures apparent in the supplied records
- Evidence of past redundancies triggered by similar financial conditions

# Further information on required elements

## Description of roles

Many reporting roles will mix PIJ reporting with other duties. It is important to note where this may occur. The extent to which a role is dedicated to PIJ will influence assessment.

Note that as with all PIJF funding, accreditation to the PIJF must occur on content outputs from funded non-incremental roles.

## Demonstration of potential PIJ void

Written evidence should be provided of the impending PIJ void caused by the loss of the role. This will be apparent in the description of the role, as above, but must also be accompanied by an assessment of similar content provided by competitors within the geographical area, or concerning the relevant subject matter. This competitive analysis need not be exhaustive, but should include descriptions of other publishers in the market, their editorial staffing (where known), audience size, and content outputs.

Note that a competitor providing similar content in the same area does not necessarily mean the application will be unsuccessful. This requirement exists to give us an overview of the market and goes to proving the need for the role.

## Financial records

The “relevant editorial division” will be the smallest business unit which includes the at-risk role, and for which a P&L (statement of profit and loss) exists. For some publishers this could be the entire business. Other publishers will have regional breakdowns that show regional costs, including editorial staffing, and regional revenue. If the role is not regional but is part of a particular business unit, then that business unit’s P&L is the relevant financial data.

It is important to share with us the internal business indicators that led to the conclusion that the roles in question were financially unsustainable. In the case of incomplete data, historical examples of role redundancy in similar financial situations can bolster the case for non-incremental funding.

Financial records should be annual and supplied over five years, in order to demonstrate trends. Where accounting systems have changed or data is not available, please explain discontinuities and note omissions.

Financial records should be supplied as functional spreadsheets. Written annotations can be supplied within spreadsheets or as text documents.

## Note on confidentiality

All confidential data provided to us should be password protected. Any external NZ On Air assessors will be required to sign Non-disclosure Agreements (NDAs) before being granted access to documentation and will be required to delete data at the conclusion of the assessment.

## Note on process and documentation

Non-incremental role applications should not be considered part of general role-based applications, but should be split out into separate applications. This will make meeting the requirements contained in this document more straightforward.

Our expectations are that along with the spreadsheets of financial data, the text documents describing roles, potential PIJ voids and a competitive overview will run to several pages. While we are mindful this creates considerable workload for the applicant, rigour is required for a process which potentially funds existing roles within a commercial enterprise.

Following receipt of the detailed proposal, there may also be a requirement to meet assessors to discuss the application. We will undertake to complete assessment as soon as possible, but please be aware the process will take as long as required to ensure an adequate understanding of the relevant financial and competitive situation.