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23 May 2024

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### Official Information request and response

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act ("OIA") dated 24 April 2024.

You have requested:

*In regards to the latest funding rounds, please supply the documentation related to the funding approval of the following project: **The Gender Agenda**, 5 x 10', Rumbletoon for viewing on YouTube, up to \$395,115. Anthony Bourdain-meets-queercore-punk-rock in this docu-series following non-binary host, Perrin Hastings, in a search for answers and gender identity.*

1. *Who is providing "Commissioning Oversight" on this project please?*
2. *What is the "Platform" and expected audience numbers?*
3. *Budget, proposal, all correspondence.*

Please see our response below:

1. For context, *The Gender Agenda* is a project funded as part of our *Within My Reach* youth RFP (request for proposals). This initiative was a response to the 2022 [Where Are the Youth Audiences](#) research which showed a social media-first approach would be needed to reach 15-24 year old audiences. NZ On Air allocated \$5m funding from \$10m additional funding given to NZ On Air in Budget '23 and put out a call for content that would deliver to a new [Youth Content Strategy](#). In this Youth Content Strategy document, you can also find our assessment principles for the proposals and further background on this initiative.

Given the insights from the youth audiences research, we anticipated funding content specifically for release through social media platforms. To ensure the team has the support of experienced editorial oversight in lieu of a local commissioning platform, NZ On Air required all projects to have an experienced Executive or senior producer attached and adequately budgeted for as part of this initiative. In this case, Amanda Beckett is the Executive Producer for this project. You can find more information on editorial oversight in our Funding Round Information [here](#).

2. As our website information indicated, YouTube will serve as the primary platform for this project. The project will also release short-form and marketing content through TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and YouTube Shorts.

## Connecting and reflecting Aotearoa

We do not calculate nor hold information on expected audience numbers. However, as part of our assessment principles we look at whether there is a well-defined plan, budget, and funding in place to support an ongoing rollout through social media channels to reach the intended audience. And as our earlier research showed, YouTube is the most popular online video site for 15-24 yr olds attracting 59% daily use. We will also be monitoring the audience engagement with the content once it is launched. We therefore are refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act on the grounds that the information requested does not exist.

3. I have attached the requested information we are able to release:

- A copy of the funding recommendation paper for *The Gender Agenda* submitted to the NZ ON Air Staff Investment Committee in March 2024.

We have decided to withhold some information in the provided document under Section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA due to commercial sensitivity given that the project is still in progress.

Please note, since this decision, Re: News is no longer able to support the project as a platform as a result of resourcing cuts at TVNZ. The project will now continue without Re: News' attachment and the content will be released through the project's own YouTube and social media channels. However, this is not a material change as the content will still have a social media-first outcome and aligns with the priorities of the *Within My Reach* initiative in reaching youth audiences.

We have further decided to withhold the budget and proposal under Section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA. Once this project has been released, we will be happy to reconsider your request and may be in a position to release some of the information we have redacted or withheld. Please contact us again at that time with a new request.

For your information, funding provided by NZ On Air for all successful projects is [searchable](#) on our website. You can also [sign up](#) to receive our regular industry newsletter via our website.

You have the right to refer this response to the Ombudsman if you are dissatisfied with it. More information on how to do this is [here](#). NZ On Air proactively releases information in accordance with the Government's commitment to the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan. This includes publishing responses to requests for information under the OIA. Please note that this response (with your name removed) will be published on the NZ On Air website shortly and will remain on our website for 12 months.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Yours sincerely



Sharon Kerry  
**HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES**