

Open Call for Expression of Interest for Community-based Dietary Intervention Study: He Rourou Whai Painga

National
SCIENCE
Challenges

The vitality and sustainability of the New Zealand (NZ) food and beverage (F&B) sector is of critical importance to the NZ economy, especially in a *post* COVID-19 era, and to the health of the NZ population. The High Value Nutrition (HVN) National Science Challenge Ko Ngā Kai Whai Painga is a collaboration of scientists and businesses who aim to validate the nutritional value and health benefits of fresh food and food products for the benefit of consumers, whether in NZ or elsewhere in the world.

Nāku te rourou, nāu te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi katoa.
With my contribution and yours, the people will thrive.

HIGH-VALUE
NUTRITION

Ko Ngā Kai
Whai Painga

HVN has created a research fund to support a community dietary intervention study known as **He Rourou Whai Painga**. This concept draws from the traditional 'rourou' or flax plaited food basket, which contains 'whai painga' nourishing/ high-value New Zealand foods.

HVN invites Expressions of Interest (EoI) from the NZ science community to work with the F&B business sector to design and undertake a large-scale dietary intervention study.

What is the purpose and scale of the dietary intervention study?

- The study's overarching purpose is to provide evidence through rigorous research that a diet which includes a specific selection of NZ F&B products offers health benefits to consumers. There will be a particular focus on the priority health themes within HVN of metabolic, immune and digestive health in adults.
- The proposed study must be suitably ambitious with demonstration of innovative methodologies to provide scientific support for the validation of the health benefits of NZ foods. The study would likely involve a multi-arm, multi-site dietary intervention study that combines the provision of NZ Foods as a significant part of the diet.
- The proposed study must be consistent with the values of HVN, which recognise the interdependence of economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors in the development and evaluation of high-value foods for health.
- Proposed research must be aligned with the HVN Vision Mātauranga Strategy for Tranche 2 (<https://www.highvaluenutrition.co.nz/about-us/vision-matauranga/>), which includes a focus on Māori researcher capacity, capability-building, and effective engagement with Māori F&B partners and stakeholders. Of particular note, HVN is committed to following best practice in the co-development of access and benefit sharing (ABS) and appropriate protection arrangements for any mātauranga Māori or taonga species that is proposed for inclusion in a project

How will design of the study be supported?

- The HVN Directorate will provide assistance with the design of the study. A range of platform technologies developed in Tranche 1 of the HVN National Science Challenge are expected to



be engaged in order to bolster a systems approach to nutrition, including metabolic and immunological profiling and microbiome analyses. The HVN Directorate will aid in liaising with the F&B sector for the provision of food products and co-funding.

- Funding of NZ \$3M is potentially available to support the study. Further details regarding funding / co-funding arrangements will be clarified at the workshop following the due date for Eols (see below for submission details).

Who is eligible to submit an Expression of Interest?

- Eols may be submitted by individual New Zealand-based scientists, or by small NZ-based consortia that combine nutritional, dietetic, clinical, and systems biology expertise to demonstrate that dietary interventions with NZ Foods may help to maintain and improve health.
- We invite Eols from individuals and research teams who may wish to lead the study or to participate in the study as a member of a larger consortium. Current HVN-funded researchers are eligible to apply.

How can you submit an Expression of Interest?

- To submit an Eol, email HVN@auckland.ac.nz with name(s) and affiliation(s) and a maximum 500 word summary of your particular expertise and research interests by **12th July 2020**.
- Following receipt of an Eol, selected invitees will be invited to a workshop by the HVN Directorate. The focus will be on bringing together the best research team, which may also include identification of other researchers not already present. Based on discourse at the workshop, invitees may be invited to submit a full proposal.

Timeline

- Submission of Eol – submissions due to HVN Directorate 12th July 2020.
- Invitation to workshop – invitations to be sent to selected attendees on 27th July 2020.
- Workshop – early August (tbc).

Who will be assessing each Eol and deciding who will be invited to the workshop?

- Applications will be assessed by the HVN Directorate for alignment with the HVN National Science Challenge and purpose of the dietary intervention study. Other members or observers may be added to the panel as appropriate.
- Any conflicts of interest will be noted and managed throughout the process.
- Costs to attend the initial workshop will be by the applicant or their employer.

Assessment criteria for EoI

- Expertise that will enrich the ability of HVN to conduct the dietary intervention study;
- Promotes the Vision Mātauranga framework;
- Overall experience and evidence of research quality;
- Potential consumer health and wellbeing opportunities;
- Clinical research experience; and
- Expertise and / or interest in working with the food and beverage industry.

What is the process after the workshop?

- The HVN Directorate will make final observations at the workshop and invite researchers / consortia, in writing, to submit a study proposal for subsequent external review.

When is the dietary intervention study expected to begin?

- The HVN Directorate is aiming to initiate the study in early 2021 following approval of ethics submissions. This timeline is subject to change.

Contact

If you wish to clarify any aspect of the call for EoI please send an email with your query to hvn@auckland.ac.nz.

Confidentiality

The University of Auckland (as Challenge Contractor for HVN) will treat all EoIs as confidential subject to any legal requirements under the Official Information Act 1982 or any other relevant law. Submissions may be viewed by the HVN Directorate and the HVN Board. Submissions will be stored electronically in a folder accessible only to the HVN team (and UoA IT staff). Applicants must be willing to present their submissions to all attendees of the workshop.

Obligations of Applicants

Applicants agree to enter into the Call for Expression of Interest process in good faith. This includes maintaining correspondence from HVN in confidence and acting reasonably in agreeing to any future participation. Applicants must be aware that HVN may use photos, quotes or videos from workshops in internal HVN communications.

DISCLAIMER

The University of Auckland on behalf of the HVN Board reserves the right to withdraw or amend this document and/or the timelines set within it at any time.