**Local Solutions for Māori Language Revival**

Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, the Māori Language Commission, is encouraging individuals, community groups, marae, hapū, whānau and organisations who seek support for Māori language revitalisation initiatives, to apply for funding from the Mā te Reo fund.

For the last 14 years Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, through the Mā te Reo fund, has supported over 1,500 projects, including; whānau-produced resources, iwi and hapū language books and glossaries, wānanga (language learning classes), kura reo (immersion language programmes), and special events encouraging Māori language use, for example, story-telling sessions in Māori for children.

Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori Acting Chief Executive, Tuehu Harris, says the Fund – the only one of its kind – provides a critical opportunity for locally driven and locally focussed Māori language initiatives to gain support, and build on growing language proficiency and use in the regions.

“Whether it is holding wānanga whaikōrero, karanga or a special reo-focused event, the fund’s criterion is flexible enough to accommodate most initiatives. “Many iwi-based organisations have sought Mā te Reo assistance as they work to revive and maintain their own iwi and hapū-led Māori language strategies.”

Statistics New Zealand released findings from New Zealand’s first survey on Māori wellbeing conducted in 2013, which showed 55 percent Māori adults had some ability to speak te reo Māori, compared with 42 percent in 2001. Auckland, meanwhile, has a significant Māori population and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori would like to see an increase in applications from that region.

“There is a growing number of people learning Māori and it is important that funding initiatives like Mā te Reo continue to have a positive effect on reviving our language in the regions,’ Harris says.

This year will also see applicants test the fund’s new application website which has had a revamp in order to make the process more user friendly. Anyone who wants to apply for funding from Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (whether an existing provider or a new applicant) must first register in the new system, Pūnaha Pūtea. The new registration process enables us to ensure applicant eligibility and other important details, before proceeding to the application itself. The new system also means that applications will now only be received online.

Mā te Reo was officially opened on Monday 27 July, 2015 by the Minister for Māori Development, the Hon Te Ururoa Flavell, as part of Te Wiki o te Reo Māori celebrations.  The public are now invited to apply online.

Registration to the Fund can be completed at [www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz](http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)