



COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND 2026



ELECTORAL COMMISSION

We are an independent, impartial Crown entity who works with and through communities to:

- inform, engage and educate New Zealanders about the value of participation
- make it easy for them to enrol and vote
- promote understanding of New Zealand's democratic processes
- deliver parliamentary elections and referendums.



COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND: THE BASICS

The purpose of the Community Education Fund (CEF) is to provide small grants to local organisations to deliver enrolment focused activities in their own communities.

This will include facilitating education opportunities and supporting electoral preparedness in communities that have lower rates of enrolment and voting.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND: TWO PARTS

Māori Electoral Option

- Request amount **up to \$25,000**
- Applications open between **7 April-11 May**
- Projects focused on education for Māori communities about the choice between Māori roll and general roll

General Election

- Request amount **up to \$25,000**
- Applications open between **25 May-19 Jun**
- Projects focused on education about enrolling to vote in the 2026 elections in communities with lower rates of enrolment and voting

Organisations are welcome to apply to both parts of the Community Education Fund

COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND: APPLICATION CRITERIA



The project educates Māori communities about the Māori Electorate Option OR the project educates communities with lower rates of enrolment and voting about enrolling to vote in the 2026 General Election.



The organisation has strong relationships in the communities it will serve with this project.



The project delivers Electoral Commission messages to the communities it serves.



The organisation delivers its project in a politically neutral manner.



The organisation securely collects, manages, stores, and transfers sensitive personal data.

BASIC MESSAGES: MĀORI ELECTORAL OPTION

More detail on [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz) and in the application



If you're Māori you choose to be on either the Māori roll or the general roll.



If you're on the Māori roll, you'll vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate. If you're on the general roll, you'll vote for a candidate in a general electorate. Your roll choice doesn't affect your party vote.



If you want to change rolls, you need to make your choice by midnight, Thursday 6 August. You can't change rolls in the 3 months before election day.

BASIC MESSAGES: GENERAL ELECTION

More detail on [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz) and in the application



To vote in the general election, you need to be enrolled.



For the 2026 election, we encourage everyone to enrol early, by 4 October 2026.



Enrolling isn't something you do once. You need to keep your enrolment up to date so you're ready to vote.

TIMEFRAMES FOR THE COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND

Māori Electoral Option	General Election
Application deadline: 11 May 2026	Application deadline: 19 June 2026
Project delivery: 18 June to 6 August 2026	Project delivery: 17 August to 25 October
All project activities must end by 6 August 2026	All project activities must end by 25 October 2026

WHO WILL APPLY TO THE COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND?

Community-based legal entities only

- **Hapū, iwi, registered charities, incorporated societies, churches.**
- **No individuals, schools, libraries, for-profit businesses, or local or regional councils.**
- Can provide a project plan, risk register, financial reporting with their applications; can save receipts, etc.
- Can attend a political neutrality/data privacy training if their applications are successful.

Organisations that:

- Have a strong relationships and a good track record of serving their communities.
- Can deliver their projects in alignment with the Commission campaigns for Māori Electoral Option and/or General Election.
- Agree to use Electoral Commission messages and resources.
- **Can deliver their projects in a politically neutral manner.**
- **Can safely collect, store, and transfer personal data.**
- **Can manage any conflicts of interest.**

APPLYING TO BOTH PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND

Community organisations can apply to **both** the Māori Electoral Option and the general election parts of the fund.

You must apply separately to each part of the fund.

Each part of the fund has a different focus, aligned to the relevant Electoral Commission messages.

Application timeframes mean you could be delivering on the Māori Electoral Option part of the fund whilst applying to the General Election part of the fund at the same time.

The outcome of your application to the Māori Electoral Option part of the fund does not affect the outcome of your application to the general election part of the fund.

CAN I APPLY FOR...?

Yes

- Project-specific salary for staff brought on for this specific community education project.
- Project-specific travel expenses, koha, petrol vouchers, event costs, venue hire, manaakitanga, etc.
- Project-specific capital expenditure: tablets, etc. (must include an invoice/quote in the application).

No

- BAU: salary for regular staff, office rent, admin costs, etc.
- A project that has already started—no retrospective funding.
- Any project that provides prizes or gifts to enrol or to vote.
- Any project that endorses a political candidate, political party, or political issue.

THE COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND IS A GOOD FIT FOR:



Community organisations that want to support their communities in participating in the democratic process



Established community organisations that are well known, well trusted, and well connected in their communities



Community organisations that have the capacity and capability to deliver a focused project with tight timeframes and who are interested in working closely with the Electoral Commission

WHAT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE?

Eligibility questionnaire

Application questions

FAQs including contact information, timeframes, and processes

Templates for the project plan, risk register, and budget

An applicant checklist summarising which documents you need and where to send the application

Information on political neutrality, conflicts of interest, and handling personal information

POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

The Electoral Commission must be politically neutral to ensure our reputation is maintained, and we are building the public's knowledge, trust, and confidence in the electoral system.

Anyone delivering services and engaging with voters on our behalf must also do that in a politically neutral way.

POLITICAL NEUTRALITY



Deliver the Electoral Commission's messages only, unaffected by your own personal beliefs



Do not publicly express a political opinion or comment on parties or candidates



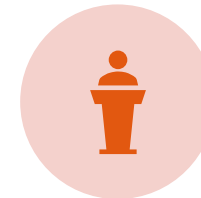
Do not communicate privately with Ministers or members of Parliament about matters concerning your project or the Electoral Commission



Do not advise anyone on who to vote for, or which roll to enrol on between the general or Māori roll



Do not be involved in a public way in furthering the interests of a political party or candidate or referendum issue



Do not lobby or attempt to influence a minister or members of Parliament about decisions that fall **including those that fall within the Commission's remit**

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest happens when a person's personal interests or obligations conflict with the responsibilities of their job or position. It means that their independence, objectivity or impartiality can be called into question.

A conflict of interest can arise through a relationship, an activity, or strong personal views. A conflict of interest can be financial or non-financial.

A conflict of interest can be:

- actual: where the conflict already exists
- potential: where the conflict is about to happen, or could happen
- perceived: where other people might reasonably think that a person has been compromised.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1

Identify any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest in the project for which you are applying for funding.

2

Let the Electoral Commission know about a potential, actual, or perceived conflict of interest during the Community Education Fund application or delivery process.

3

Manage the conflict of interest in your Community Education Fund project if one arises.

HANDLING PERSONAL INFORMATION

Personal information is any information that identifies or is about an individual, such as the information found in an enrolment form.

You are required to ensure the personal information in your care is kept safe, and the privacy of the people whose information you hold is upheld.

Only collect personal information if it is directly related and necessary to the activities you are carrying out as part of your Community Engagement Fund project.

HANDLING PERSONAL INFORMATION



Keep all personal information safe and private once you have collected it.



Only use personal information for the purpose it was collected.



Delete or destroy any personal information you hold in relation to your Community Education Fund project, once the project is finished.



Give all paper enrolment forms to the Electoral Commission according to the instructions. **All enrolment forms must be given to the Commission and not held onto after you're done.**



Do not use personal information for any other reason than enrolling people to vote.



Do not collect information on how people intend to vote, how they might vote, or their personal details that are not on the enrolment form.

HOW TO APPLY TO THE COMMUNITY EDUCATION FUND



Check out the
FAQ on
elections.nz



Find the
criteria,
exclusions, and
application
questions at
elections.nz



Learn about the
requirements
for political
neutrality,
conflicts of
interest, and
handling
personal
information



Complete the
eligibility
questionnaire
to make sure
you do not fall
under any
exclusions



Answer the
application
questions



Fill in your
project plan,
budget, and
risk register
templates



Provide your
financial
reporting and
organisation
bank details



**Email all your
application
materials by
midnight on
the deadline
date**



cef@elections.govt.nz

THANK YOU

**Please get in touch if you have any questions
at any point**

cef@elections.govt.nz