TĪMATANGA INITIATE
GRANT PROPOSAL

This grant funds early-stage AUT research where there's an outside collaborator wanting to use the research outcomes. The grant's goal is to create future commercialisation and impact opportunities.

Is this grant a good fit for your project?

If you've identified a real-world problem that can be solved with some research and have a non-academic collaborator that wants to help bring your solution to life, then this grant may be for you. The Tīmatanga Initiate grant can be used for normal research costs like prototyping (materials and services), research assistant time and travel. The project should be aiming to reach an outcome that can be used by the collaborator directly, or to create a proof-of-concept that needs further development.

Criteria

A credible collaborator & a pathway to realisation

The application will be assessed largely based on **the level of support the project has from a credible non-academic collaborator from outside AUT**. What we're looking for is confidence that the collaborator has deep experience of a real-world problem, and is genuinely committed to using the project results to solve it – if the project is successful.

Collaborator commitment would usually by signalled by buy-in from top decision-makers, alongside significant in-kind or financial contributions. Strong proposals (especially those at the upper end of the allowed project costs) will include formal commitment from the collaborator, such as a letter of intent. (AUT Ventures can help you with the pre- and post-project discussions with your collaborators.)

Where the collaborator is a **business**, good proposals should be able to show an intent to buy or license the intellectual property if the project is successful. Projects with individual entrepreneurs might work, if the entrepreneur is experienced in the relevant market, committed, and has a credible go-to-market plan.

Where the collaborator is **non-commercial, such as government, public sector, or community groups**, the Tīmatanga Initiate Grant should lead to better wellbeing or other outcomes for stakeholders, patients, clients, members etc. Good proposals will show a clear intent, as well as the capability and authority to adopt and implement the research outcomes in policy or practice.

Sometimes the Tīmatanga Initiate Grant might fund a proof-of-concept that leads to a further, larger grant proposal with other funders. In this case, the outside collaborator would be expected to actively support that future project too.

Relationship with other sources of funding

The Tīmatanga Grant is not intended to compete with other funding. However, where research has already been done, it might be that KiwiNet commercialisation funding is a better option. Before developing a Tīmatanga Initiate Grant application, please **check with the AUT Ventures team to see whether KiwiNet might be a better option for you**.

Available funding

The Tīmatanga Initiate Grant is aimed at projects from $5k to $40k in cost. Multiple projects will be funded, but the number will change year to year.

Because the grants will be allocated a first-come-first-served basis, **we strongly advise you to check the current status with us at ventures@aut.ac.nz** before starting to prepare an application.

Help with your proposal

AUT Ventures can help you with at least two aspects of your application:

- helping you and your collaborator plan how the project outcomes would be turned into a sustainable product or service if the project is successful; and
- understanding what intellectual property (IP) will be needed, created, and protected for the project.

Contact the AUT Ventures team to arrange a pre-application meeting via email ventures@aut.ac.nz.

TIP: Talk to your School or Faculty industry engagement team if you need help with finding a collaborator.

Submission

Please send completed documents to autventures@aut.ac.nz.

Proposal

1. High level information (not scored)

Title		
Summary of project *2-3 sentences*		
Principal Investigator	**Full name**	
	Job Title	
	Department	
	Email	
	Phone	
Project start *When would it start?*		
Duration of project *Max. duration 12 months(s)*		
Requested grant *$10,000 - $40,000*		

2. Problem & solution (30%)

Problem (max 150 words)	*Describe the **pain point or problem** you are solving. Explain how you know that it's a pain point – i.e. any **market validation** work that has been done to date.*
Scale of the problem (max 150 words)	*How big is this problem, in New Zealand and overseas.*
Existing solutions (max 150 words)	*Describe any current solutions, and what the problem is with them.*
Proposed solution (max 150 words)	*Describe your proposed solution and how you arrived at the idea, including why it's better than the current solutions.*

3. Collaborator(s) (40%)

External collaborator(s) (max 150 words)	*There must be collaboration with at least one <u>external</u> party who provides a <u>credible pathway to turning the project outcomes into real world impact</u>. Introduce your collaborator(s), and why they are a credible pathway to impact. How does this project align with their goals?*
Commitment to the project (max 150 words)	*How can we tell the collaborator is committed to creating impact from the project if it's successful? Will they make monetary or in-kind contributions? Is there an agreement in place with them about licensing IP or some other arrangement?* ***(AUT Ventures will help with these discussions.)***
Pathway to market (max 150 words)	*How do the external partners intend to commercialise the project outputs? This section may include the commercial plan (if any) i.e. any work done on the business model, and the enablers and barriers in the potential implementation pathway(s).*

4. Project plan (30%)

Main objective (max 100 words)	*What is the primary goal or deliverable of the project?*
Risks (max 200 words)	*Explain what could go wrong with achieving the main objective.* ●
Out of scope (max 150 words)	*What work is out of scope. In particular, explain what will still be left to do after the project, to enable the collaborator to use the project outputs.* ●
Project team (max 150 words)	*Explain who is involved and what their roles are in the project. Describe their skills, knowledge and/or experience relevant to the proposed activities. Collaborations and involvement of other researchers and groups, and of course the main collaborator, are encouraged. However, the majority of the research must be carried out at AUT. Provide links to academic, LinkedIn or other profiles.* ●

#	Milestones *Briefly outline 2-4 project milestones.*	How will we know this has been achieved? *i.e. what are the success criteria, quantitative if possible?*	Duration *How many months will this take?*
1			
2			
3			
4			

5. Budget

Complete the Excel template and submit it with your proposal document.

Other funding sources (max 100 words)	*Provide details of any previous or expected upcoming sources of funding for this project (e.g. AUT, RPA[1], the collaborator, MBIE, Marsden, HRC). If none, please indicate as N/A.*

6. Strategic alignment

Strategic Alignment (max 150 words) Bonus: 15%	*Projects that address AUT's strategic focus areas will be prioritised if there are more projects proposed, than can be supported. Explain how your project aligns with the following current focus areas:* • *Te Aronui – unlocking the innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people* • *Partnerships with underserved communities* • *Gaming, digital and AI* • *Working with SMEs*

7. Other

Ethics & Regulatory Approvals (max 100 words)	*What ethics or any other approvals will you need to conduct the project?*

---

[1] Research Programme Account

Intellectual Property

AUT Ventures will work with you to complete this section.

What intellectual property (IP) is expected to be created from this project? How will it be protected (if applicable)?	
Is there any existing IP, and if so, what agreements are in place?	
What agreements are in place about use of the IP (if any)?	