

Reflective questions for funders

We recognise that funders often lack the data they need to support changes in strategic direction or to measure the impact of their funding. The questions below have been developed to support organisations that would like to enrich their decision-making with information derived through use of an equity lens.

- What relationships do we hold with mana whenua and with tangata whenua in our area? How is this reflected in our strategic planning and decision-making?
- Are our strategic priorities and decision-making community-led? Do we look for opportunities to use co-design practices?
- How many groups in our region have applied for funding from us in the last year?
- Can we describe those groups in terms of sectors, communities, geography?
- What is the dollar value that has been applied for (range and median) and how does this compare with what is granted? Could this data be presented in aggregate form in our annual reports?
- How many groups have we funded in the past year?
- Can we describe those groups in terms of sectors, communities, geography?
- What areas can we fund, but find it difficult to allocate funding to? For example, some funders say they do not grant much funding to Māori/Pacific/youth as they do not have many applicants from these communities. If this is our situation, what are our strategies to address this?
- Using a sample project, how long would it take us to apply for and report on funding using our organisation's forms? How much would we need to amend the project's objectives and planning to make it fit with the strategic goals in our application forms? How easily would the project budget fit into our funding template?
- What is the evidence basis for the way we operate and the decisions we make? For example, what evidence do we have that shows partial or contributory funding is an effective strategy?
- What assumptions do we make and what are the values that underlie those assumptions? How do these assumptions contribute to the inequities around us?
- How might we reframe some of our language and cultural frameworks, eg shifting from a funding to an investment perspective, lifting the practice of community development so that people are at the centre, or seeing community energy and interest as not something to be managed but something that is worth investing in and being led by?
- Do we apply an equity lens across our work? Does our research explore issues from an equity perspective? Do we include metrics in our data collection and reporting that will give us a picture of how different groups are doing? When we set objectives for our policies and projects, do we aim to reduce inequalities and ensure equity of access and opportunity?