



Unlocking Curious Minds
Contestable Fund

Assessment Guidelines

August 2017



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI

newzealand.govt.nz

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Unlocking Curious Minds

A contestable fund for lifting New Zealander's engagement with science and technology.

Foreword

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a member of the Assessment Panel for proposals submitted for funding under the Unlocking Curious Minds contestable fund (the Fund) 2018 investment round.

We have selected you and other Assessment Panel members based on your knowledge and experience. You have not been selected as 'representative' of a particular organisation or sector.

Informed assessment of proposals is a critical aspect of MBIE's investment process, as it forms the basis of MBIE's recommendations on whether to fund a proposal.

These guidelines describe the assessment process, the roles involved, and gives guidance on how to record your assessments in MBIE's Investment Management system (IMS portal).

We recommend that you read this document in conjunction with the Unlocking Curious Minds Contestable Fund Call for Proposals and other relevant information at <http://www.curiousminds.nz/ucm>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us:

Curious Minds website <http://www.curiousminds.nz/about/article/30/unlocking-curious-minds/>

Email Proposal queries: curiousminds@mbie.govt.nz
Portal queries: imssupport@mbie.govt.nz

Phone 0800 693 778 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm)

Once again, thank you for your involvement in the Fund assessment process and supporting MBIE's investment processes.

Dr. Prue Williams
General Manager, Science System Investment and Performance

Funding from the Unlocking Curious Minds Contestable Fund can be used to support the costs of delivering innovative new science and technology engagement projects aimed at groups who do not have:

- > a background of engagement with science and technology, and/or
 - > an understanding of how science and technology can affect them and change the way they live their lives.
-

Section 1: Assessment Roles and Responsibilities



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The Key Roles in the Assessment Process

The following details the roles involved in the assessment of proposals for funding from the Unlocking Curious Minds Contestable Fund and their responsibilities.

Assessment is performed by a panel of Assessors normally comprising 10 members. Each member is required to assess a selection of proposals and attend an Assessment Panel meeting during which the preliminary scores and comments are reviewed, scored and ranked. The rankings are then reported to MBIE.

MBIE publishes the names and a short biography of each Assessor on its website.

If the volume of proposals is large, MBIE may engage additional Assessors to assess, score and comment on proposals ahead of the Panel meeting.

Assessors

As an Assessor your role is to assess proposals submitted for the Unlocking Curious Minds contestable fund and provide advice to MBIE including scores and ranking of proposals. Their responsibilities include:

- > participating in the required MBIE training
- > declaring any conflicts of interest
- > reading all assigned proposals, assigning preliminary scores (using a 7-point scoring system against the assessment criteria) and recording the scores and supporting commentary in MBIE's Investment Management System (IMS) portal
- > attending an Assessment Panel meeting, where the preliminary scores and comments are reviewed, scored and ranked, and advice on the assessment results is recorded by MBIE. Note that the Assessment Panel does not have delegated authority to make funding decisions
- > introducing as Lead Assessor, one or more proposals at the Assessment Panel meeting.

Assessment Panel Chair

The Chair must:

- > ensure that the assessment process is robust and assessment results, including consensus scores and ranking of proposals, are defensible
- > ensure that the Assessment Panel follows the scoring system and provides sound advice
- > allow time for informed discussion and equitable decision-making for proposals and mediate if views become polarised
- > identify and take appropriate action over conflicts of interest
- > ensure that the Assessment Panel develops appropriate consensus commentary on proposals to inform funding recommendations and to enable appropriate feedback to applicants.

MBIE Support

MBIE staff will assist Assessors and the Chair during the assessment process and at the Assessment Panel meeting. They will also:

- > record the Panel's consensus commentary and collate proposal scores
- > deliver, in a draft report, the panel's comments, advice and scores of the Assessment Panel to the Chair for approval. This report will inform the funding recommendations made to the GM Science System, Investment and Performance.

Time Commitment

We expect the involvement of panel members to be up to five and a half days.

UP TO...	TO
Half a day	read through the background and training material, and attend a training session via teleconference or in person
Three days	Read the assigned proposals, assign preliminary scores and enter those scores with comment in the IMS portal
Two days	Attend the Assessment Panel meeting in Wellington

Confidentiality

Assessors must:

- > ensure the safe-keeping of all proposals and related documents (*for example, workbooks, notes, etc.*).
- > destroy any remaining documentation or return it to MBIE at the conclusion of the Assessment Panel meeting.
- > not correspond with or discuss the contents or assessment of any proposal with the applicant or any other party. If an applicant contacts you about a proposal:
 - direct them to MBIE (curiousminds@mbie.govt.nz), and
 - email MBIE (curiousminds@mbie.govt.nz) with the details of your contact.

Official Information Act 1982

Proposals and the assessment of proposals are confidential. However, as MBIE is subject to the Official Information Act 1982, information relating to an assessment will be released if requested to do so.

Conflicts of Interest

MBIE follows a rigorous process to maintain the credibility of investment decisions and to assure applicants that their proposals are given fair and reasonable appraisal.

Before commencing your assessments, you need to check your list of assigned proposals for any conflicts of interest and either accept or decline the assignments as appropriate.

What is Considered a Conflict of Interest?

Conflicts of interest may occur on two different levels:

- > A **direct** conflict of interest; where you are:
 - directly involved with a proposal (as a participant, manager, mentor, or partner) or you have a close personal relationship with the applicant, for example, family members, OR
 - a collaborator or in some other way involved with an applicant's work programme.
- > An **indirect** conflict of interest; where you:
 - are employed by an organisation involved in a proposal but you are not part of the applicant's work programme.
 - have a personal and/or professional relationship with one of the applicants, for example, an acquaintance.
 - have an involvement with a proposal that is in direct competition with a proposal being assessed or where the impacts proposed by a proposal under discussion may compete with your personal business interests.

If you are from a University or Crown Research Institute or other large organisation, you may assist in the assessment of proposals from that institution providing you have no direct or limited indirect interest in the proposal. If in doubt,

declare and discuss with MBIE.

Reporting Identified Conflicts

All conflicts of interest must be declared.

When reading an executive summary of an assigned proposal, if you identify a clear and direct conflict, decline the proposal. The proposal will be reassigned to another Assessor and a replacement proposal will be assigned to you.

If you feel you have an indirect conflict email MBIE at curiousminds@mbie.govt.nz advising the details for further discussion.

Handling Conflicts of Interest During the Assessment Panel Meeting

If there is a **direct conflict** of interest with a Proposal about to be discussed during the Panel meeting, declare the conflict to the Chair. You will be required to leave the room during the ensuing assessment discussion.

The actions required for a declared **indirect conflict** of interest is the discretion of the Assessment Panel chair; this could be to:

- > leave the room
- > stay but remain silent unless asked to respond to a direct question
- > contribute to the assessment of the proposal.

Should the Chair declare a conflict of interest with a proposal, a Deputy Chair will be appointed for the ensuing assessment discussion.

All conflict of interest declarations and resulting Assessor actions during the Panel meeting will be recorded.

Section 2: The Assessment Criteria and Scoring System



8 Criteria and Scoring Guide

For each criterion, select a score ranging from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest) from the Scoring Guide that best matches your assessment of the Excellence and Impact key questions. Record your scores in MBIE's IMS – a secure online portal and comment on why you selected that score. Your comments should also identify strengths along with the specific reasons for any deficiencies; particularly if you are recording a score of 4 or less.

EXCELLENCE

Weighting: 50%

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

When assessing against the **Excellence** criteria, consider the proposals impact on these areas:

- > **Quality Plan:** Clear plan, outcomes and measurement
A coherent strategy and project plan, including clear outcomes, how outcomes will be achieved, and how success will be measured.
- > **Target Group:** Clearly defined, harder to reach
The project idea is relevant to the current issues and needs of the target group and involves innovative approaches and engagement methods, appropriate for the target group.
- > **Science and Technology Rigor:** Scientific rigour maintained
It is clear that the science and technology component of the project will be managed to maintain scientific rigour and accuracy.
- > **Quality Team:** Right team, deliver in time, good connections with target group
Quality of the project team – including skills mix, support, resources, experience and track record. Ability to deliver the project within the required timeframe. Ability of the project team to connect with the target group.
- > **Linkages:** Strong linkages with relevant partners
If relevant, the strength of linkages with relevant partners and others involved in science and technology engagement in the relevant area and field of engagement.
- > **Value for Money:** Good value for money
The project demonstrates good value for money.

IMPACT

Weighting: 50%

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

When assessing against the **Impact** criteria, consider the proposals impact on these areas:

- > **Increased Engagement:** Target group likely to be more engaged
The project is likely to contribute to the Fund objective and outcomes. The project is targeted toward a clearly defined target group for whom there are opportunities and benefits for increased engagement with science and technology.
- > **Increased Importance:** Likely that science & technology will be more important for target group
Successful delivery of the project is likely to deliver positive change in the way the target group engages with science and technology so that science and technology becomes more important or relevant for them and/or they are able to engage societal debate about science and technology issues.
- > **Leverage:** Leverages off other initiatives and resources
Where possible, the extent to which the project will leverage off other organisations, resources, and/or initiatives, to maximise existing resources. The extent of collaboration with other organisations and other initiatives/resources to deliver the project (for Regional/National Grants only).

Scoring Guide

SCORE	KEY WORDS	EXCELLENCE Weighting: 50%	IMPACT Weighting: 50%
1 (Very low)	<i>None Insufficient Not relevant No information Missing</i>	Content is missing, irrelevant or has no potential to deliver a quality project.	Content is missing, irrelevant or has no potential to have a positive impact.
2 (Low)	<i>Vague Unclear Unlikely Dubious Little relevance</i>	Many aspects are missing, have low relevance, or have little potential.	Many aspects are missing, have low relevance, or have little potential.
3 (Below average)	<i>Limited benefit / impact Minimum acceptable level Uncertainty Lacks detail</i>	Many aspects are adequately met, but with some gaps or deficiencies.	Many aspects are adequately met, but with some gaps or deficiencies.
4 (Average)	<i>Acceptable Sufficient Adequate Suitable</i>	All aspects met to a generally adequate level.	All aspects met to a generally adequate level.
5 (Above average)	<i>Significant Clear Multiple High level Robust</i>	All aspects are adequately met; with some strongly met.	All aspects are adequately met; with some strongly met.
6 (High)	<i>Certain Enduring Effective Major Comprehensive Strong Experience</i>	All aspects are strongly met; with some met at an excellent level.	All aspects are strongly met; with some met at an excellent level.
7 (Very high)	<i>Excellent Exemplary Detailed Step-change Impressive</i>	All aspects are met in a highly innovative, relevant, credible and exemplary manner.	All aspects are met in a highly innovative, relevant, credible and exemplary manner.

SCORING GUIDE

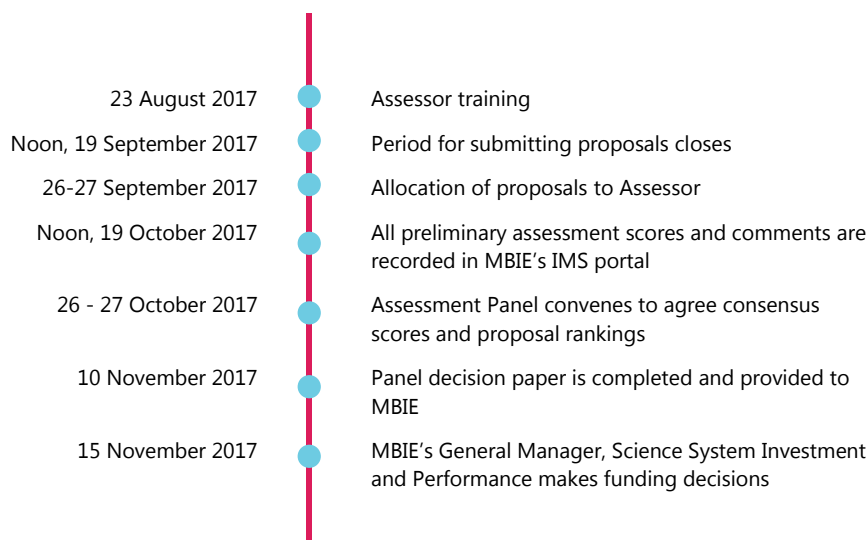
NOTES

- > The activities proposed for funding will lift levels of understanding and engagement with science and technology in “harder to reach” groups. They will also show strong evidence to support the rationale for the target group identified.
- > The activities and items proposed for funding are directly related to promoting or delivering the project.
- > In considering the assessment criteria set out above, reference should be made to the other requirements and conditions for the Fund as set out in the Call for Proposals.

Section 3: The Assessment Timeline



12 The Assessment Timeline



The **Timeline**

The following details the steps involved in the assessment timeline.

Assessor Training

Prior to performing assessments, Assessors are required to attend a one hour training session via teleconference. The purpose of this session is to familiarise Assessors with the:

- > tools and resources that are available to them including the online scoring system
- > content of the call for proposals including the structure of the proposal form and the assessment criteria
- > key changes to the process for the current round.

Detailed information about this training will be sent to attendees separately.

Allocation of Proposals to Assessors

From **26 September**, emails will be sent to Assessors informing them that proposals have been assigned. Each proposal is allocated to three Assessors.

Note that you may be assigned additional proposals at a later stage.

- > MBIE allocate proposals to Assessors:
- > based on their experience and areas of expertise, and
- > mindful of any confidentiality or conflict of interest issues raised.

For each proposal, one Assessor is designated the **Lead** and it is their responsibility to introduce the proposal at the Assessment Panel meeting.

It is in MBIE's IMS portal that all further responsibilities are executed. These involve:

1. Logging on the portal to view summaries of the proposals assigned to them, ascertain and identify any conflicts of interest and then accept or decline their assignments accordingly.

2. Opening (*download and/or print*) the full versions of all assigned, accepted proposals.
 - > Proposals are in PDF.
 - > Downloading and saving proposals to your computer allows you to access them without having to be logged into the portal.
 - > You must ensure the safe-keeping of all proposals and related documents (for example, workbooks and notes, etc.) during the assessment process and remember that all proposals and supporting documentation must be destroyed after the assessment process is completed.
3. Entering the preliminary assessment scores and commentary.
4. Submitting and archive your assessments.

Refer to page 16 for further instruction on the IMS portal.

Recording Preliminary Scores

Proposals must be read and assessed, and your scores and comments entered in the IMS portal on or before **noon, 19 October 2017**.

While certain sections of proposals specifically align with the two assessment criterion, consider the proposal as a whole before finalising your assessment.

If you consider that a proposal does not meet the requirements for other reasons (*for example, if the proposal falls within the exclusions set out in Section 2 of the Call for Proposals regarding what activities are eligible for funding and what funding can be used for*), make a note of this when recording your preliminary scores.

For each proposal, MBIE compiles the assessment scores and comments entered in the IMS portal. Where a proposal has been assessed to multiple Assessors, the scores are weighted and averaged. MBIE rank these preliminary weighted averaged scores.

Assessment Panel Meeting

The Assessment Panel convenes in Wellington to discuss the preliminary ranked assessment scores and supporting comments.

The lead for a proposal introduces the proposal at the meeting. The lead followed by other Assessment Panel members assigned to the proposal present their rationale for their scoring and any comments they have. The lead also introduces any comments from Assessors not participating in the meeting. The entire panel then discusses the proposal and scoring to arrive at a consensus score.

The panel's discussion and moderation may take into account the mix of proposals that are considered for funding for local grants and regional/national grants, the distribution of proposals by region and local area, and the target populations. The split of the total available funding has not been fixed between the two different types of grants.

MBIE records the discussion, the consensus scores and the panel's recommendations.

The Chair must:

- > prioritise the discussion of the Panel meeting taking into account the preliminary ranked assessment scores and any advice from Assessors
- > identify and takes appropriate action over conflicts of interest
- > allow time for informed discussion and equitable decision-making for proposals and mediate views if needed
- > ensure that the Assessment Panel follows the scoring system and provides sound advice
- > ensure that the Assessment Panel develops appropriate commentary on proposals to inform funding recommendations and to enable appropriate feedback to applicants
- > provide a panel report to MBIE.

Recommendations and Funding Decisions

Informed by the decisions of the Assessment Panel meeting, MBIE prepare a recommendation paper for the General Manager, Science System Investment and Performance (GM). The GM makes the funding decisions and results are publicly announced in **November 2017**.

MBIE provides general feedback based on panel comments about the overall quality of all proposals.

Section 4: Performing and Recording Assessments



Viewing Assigned Proposals and Recording Assessments

This section details how to access the proposals assigned to you for assessment and how to record your assessment. Both of these actions are performed in MBIE's Investment Management System (IMS) portal.

For portal support, contact MBIE's Investment Operations Team:

- > email imssupport@mbie.govt.nz
- > call 0800 693 778

Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 4.30pm.

Accessing the IMS Portal

To access the portal you require:

- > Chrome or Firefox
- > Your MBIE IMS portal Username and Password.

You would have received an email from MBIE containing your portal username and a temporary password. This password will expire in 72 hours and can only be used once.

■ To log in to the IMS portal:

Five or more failed log in attempts will automatically lock you out of the system. If this occurs, contact the Investment Operations Team and ask for your account to be unlocked.

For first time Assessors:

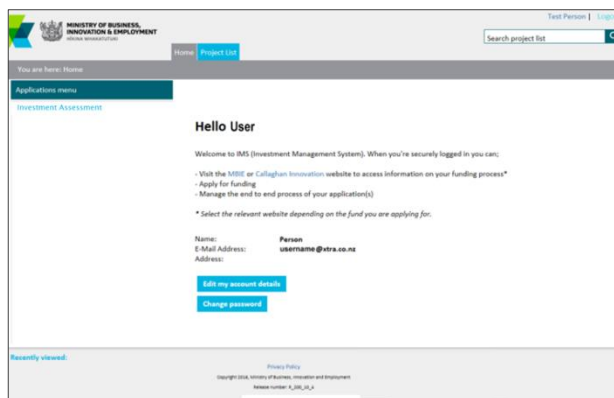
1. Click the **portal URL** link in your Welcome email. The **IMS Portal Login** screen displays.
2. Type your email address (your username is your email address) and your temporary password into the relevant fields.
3. Click the **Login** button. The **IMS Portal Edit Password** screen displays
4. Type your new password.
5. Retype your new password in the **Confirm new password** field.
6. Click the **Save Changes** button. The **Portal Access Agreement** displays.
7. Read and accept this agreement.

This will only appear once, the first time you log in.

Once accepted the portal's **Home** screen displays.

For existing Assessors:

1. Click the **MBIE IMS Portal** link (ims.msi.govt.nz/).
2. Type your Username and Password.
3. Click the **Login Securely** button. The portal's Home screen displays.



The Home page of the IMS Portal

Accepting/Declining Assigned Proposals

UCM proposals will be assigned to you for preliminary assessment **26-27 September 2017**. Additional proposals may be assigned to you after this period as a result of adjustments required due to any declared conflict of interests.

■ To accept (or decline) an assignment:

1. On the **Home** tab, click the **Investment Assessment** link > **Current** tab.
2. Read and accept the confidentiality agreement. This agreement details the terms and conditions governing the assessment process.

This agreement will only display once when you first access your list of assignments. You can revisit this agreement at any stage by clicking the **Your Confidentiality Agreement** button located top right of the **Investment Assessment** link > **Current** tab.

Once accepted, the list of all proposals assigned to you display.

Current Investment Assessments				
Name of Investment Process (Proposal)	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Action
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline
Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROJ-XXXXXXXX-XXXX	Decline

3. Scroll down the list to see your assigned proposals.

The proposals assigned to you are listed under the **View Project** column, grouped by investment process. If you have performed assessments in the past, your new UCM assignments will be at the bottom of your list under the heading **2018 Unlocking Curious Minds Fund – Local and Regional/National Grants (Proposals)**.
4. For the first proposal listed, click the **View Project** link. The proposal opens as a pdf in a new browser tab.
5. After reading the proposal, if:
 - You deem a **direct conflict of interest** exists:
 1. Select the browser tab displaying the IMS portal.
 2. Click the **Decline** button adjacent to the proposal.
 3. In the resulting dialog, enter a reason and click the **Save** button.

The declined proposal is automatically removed from your assigned list.



Remember to close the proposal.
 - You deem an **indirect conflict of interest** exists, close the proposal and email MBIE @ curiousminds@mbie.govt.nz to discuss further.
 - There is **no conflict of interest**, close the summary and click the **Accept** button adjacent to the proposal. The proposal is allocated a status of **In progress**.
6. Repeat the above steps for all the proposals in your list.

Recording Preliminary Assessments

Your scores and supporting comments must be entered on or before **12 noon, 19 October 2017**.

To record a preliminary assessment:

1. Access the **Home** tab > **Investment Assessment** page > **Current** tab.
2. Click a proposal's **View Assessment** link. A **Scoring** page displays in a separate browser tab.

3. Click the **Print** icon  (located top right). A panel will reveal underneath the **Print** icon. Here click the **Print entire project** button to open (in a separate browser tab) the full proposal. Click the  icon (top right of the panel) to hide it.

The proposal number is prominently displayed in the header of the proposal. You can download and save/print the proposal as required.

You must:

- * ensure the safe keeping of all proposals and related documents, for example, workbooks, notes, etc.
- * destroy all saved/printed proposals after the assessment process is completed.

4. Read the proposal, and then select your preliminary Excellence and Impact scores and enter any supporting commentary into the scoring page.
5. Click the **Save** button.

The **Submit** button will only become active once you have saved your assessment.

6. Click the **Submit** button. Your assessment displays in a pop up window.

7. When your assessment is complete and satisfactory to you, click the **Submit** button.

Click the **Back** button to modify your scores if necessary and/or add additional comments.

The Proposal is automatically assigned the status **Submitted**.

8. Close the browser tab displaying the **Scoring** Page and return to the tab displaying your list of assignments.

You may need to refresh the browser page to display the change in status.

9. For the Proposal you have just scored, click the **Archive** button. The Proposal is automatically removed from your list of assignments.

2017 Unlocking Curious Minds Fund - Local and Regional/National Grants (Proposal)						
View Project	Assessment Role	Assessment Stage	Status	View Assessment	Action	
Phillippa's Test Assessor Notes	Title of Assigned Proposal	Assessment Panel Member	Submitted	PROP-50420-UCMFLG-UGA	archive	

View all archived assignments on the **Archived** tab. You can retrieve the Proposal at any stage by clicking the **Unarchive** button.

The screenshot shows the IMS portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'Project List' tabs. Below this, there are tabs for 'Current' and 'Archived', with 'Archived' selected. A 'Your Confidentiality Agreement' button is visible in the top right. The main content area is titled 'Archived Investment Assessments' and includes a sub-header '2017 Unlocking Curious Minds Fund - Local and Regional/National Grants (Proposal)'. Below this is a table with columns: 'View Project', 'Assessment Role', 'Assessment Stage', 'Status', 'View Assessment', and 'Action'. The table contains one row with the following data: 'Phillippa's Test Assessor Notes', 'Title of Assigned Proposal', 'Assessment Panel Member', 'Submitted', 'PROP-50420-UCMFLG-UGA', and an 'archive' button.

Remember to destroy all saved/printed Proposals after the assessment process is completed.

UPDATING YOUR IMS PORTAL DETAILS

From the **Home** screen of the IMS portal, you can maintain your details held in the portal as and when required.

- **To view and/or update your details:**

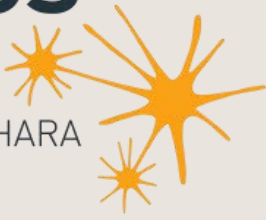
1. Click the **Edit my account details** button on the **Home** tab.
2. Update your details as required and click **Save**.

- **To change your password:**

1. Click the **Change password** button on the **Home** tab.
2. Enter your new password and click **Save**.

CURIOUS MINDS

HE HIHIRI I TE MAHARA



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
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newzealand.govt.nz