



Access Activator:

Finding new ways to make access and inclusion better



Published: February 2026

Before you start



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.

Some things you can do to make it easier are:



- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What is in this document

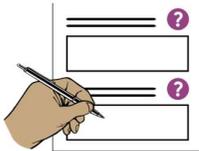
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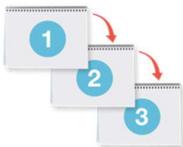
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About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is about the **Access Activator** programme by the **Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha**.



The **Access Activator** programme is a way to support people to come up with **solutions** for big problems disabled people have about:

- **access**
- **inclusion.**



Solutions are ways to sort out a problem.

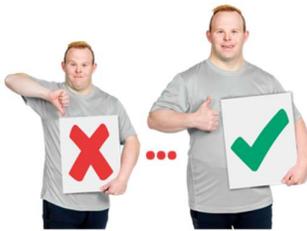


Here **access** means disabled people can use the things they:

- need
- want.



Inclusion means everyone can take part in something.



The **Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha** works to make change for disabled people to make their lives better.



They make things better for disabled people by working with:

- the Government
- the community
- businesses



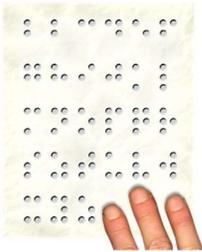


In this document the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha is called **Whaikaha**.

Where it says **our / we / us** this means Whaikaha.



Information about the Access Activator programme is also in:



- audio
- Braille
- Easy Read
- large print
- New Zealand Sign Language.



You can find this information at:

<https://whaikaha.short.gy/qwc8>



About the Access Activator programme



We want to find new solutions to problems disabled people have about:



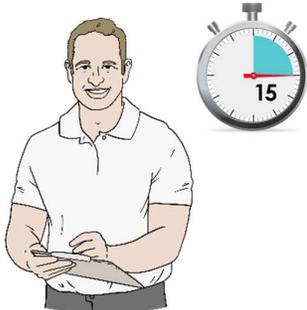
- access
- inclusion.



We have made the Access Activator programme to support people:

- who have very good solutions for access and inclusion problems
- do not have the money they need to do the work.





The solutions about access and inclusion will need to be:

- tested quickly
- delivered / done quickly.



Doing these things quickly will tell us if the solution works to make the lives of disabled people better.



Our Access Activator programme has **funding** to support this work.



Funding is money to support:

- people to do something
- groups to do something.



You can **apply** for Access Activator funding to support your ideas about access and inclusion.



Apply means to ask for something.

This funding will support work to make access and inclusion better in Aotearoa New Zealand for:



- Deaf people
- disabled people
- Turi Māori / Deaf Māori
- tāngata whaikaha Māori
- whānau / family of:
 - Deaf people
 - disabled people.





We really want to hear ideas about:

- transport like buses
- **digital access**
- information
- the **built environment**
- managing an **emergency**.

Digital access means being able to use digital technologies like:

- smartphones
- laptops
- websites
- social media like Facebook.



The **built environment** means places that people build / make like:

- public buildings like libraries
- parks
- bus stops
- train stations.



Here an **emergency** is when something happens that puts people in danger like:

- an earthquake
- a fire
- a flood.



Solutions should be about making things better for disabled people like:



- their digital experiences
- new ways to take part in their community
- **accessible communication.**



Here **accessible communication** is getting information:

- in a way you can understand like New Zealand Sign Language
- when you:
 - need it
 - want it.





Applicants who get funding will get support to:

- work on their solution
- get people to use their solution.



This support will be available from May to June 2026.

CREATIVE
HQ

Creative HQ will support applicants with:

- learning about how to do some of the work on their solution
- advice about their solution.





Creative HQ is an organisation supporting people to think up solutions so Aotearoa New Zealand can be a better place.



Whaikaha will work with Creative HQ to do this.

About Access Activator funding



This part tells you about the different kinds of Access Activator funding.

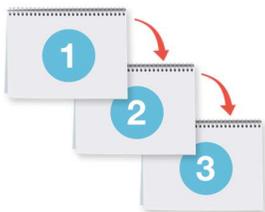


There is funding for solutions at 2 different stages of development.



1. Idea stage

You can ask for up to 25 thousand dollars in funding for this **stage**.



Here **stage** is the place / step you are up to in the work on your solution.



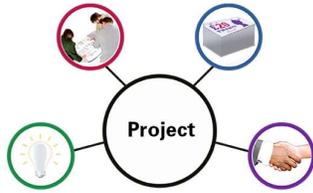
This stage is about your first ideas about solutions for access and inclusion problems.



For this stage you:

- might not have made a final plan for your solution yet
- have a very good idea about:
 - what will be in your plan
 - how to make an easy way to test if your solution will work.





2. Scale stage

Here **scale** is where your solution can go from being used by a few disabled people to being used by lots of disabled people.



You can ask for up to 1 hundred thousand dollars in funding for this stage.



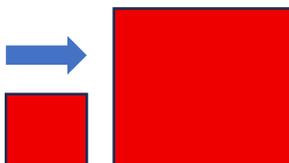
This stage is where you:

- have already tested your solution
- can show your solution works.



This stage is also for:

- if your solution is already being used by disabled people
- supporting more people by making your solution bigger.



Who can apply for Access Activator funding?



The Access Activator programme welcomes **applications** from:

- disabled-led organisations
- groups of disabled-led organisations
- community groups
- non-government organisations
- Māori organisations
- **iwi entities.**



Here an **application** is when you apply for Access Activator funding

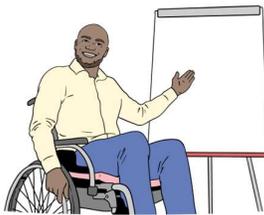


An **iwi entity** is an organisation that is part of a Māori iwi / tribe.



Iwi entities often take care of things for the rest of the iwi like:

- iwi businesses
- iwi land
- support for the community like funding education.



The Access Activator programme also welcomes applications from:

- **social enterprises**
- startups / new businesses.





Here **social enterprises** are businesses that work to:

- make money
- support their community.



The Access Activator programme also welcomes applications from:

- small organisations
- medium sized organisations
- groups of people with lived experience of disability who:
 - know a lot about access and inclusion
 - can use what they know to do work about access and inclusion.





A person with a great idea needs to be funded through a **fundholder**.



Here a **fundholder** is an organisation that holds the funds / money while you do the work set out in your project.



A fundholder must be:

- a **legal entity**
- willing / happy to hold your funding in its bank account while you complete your project.





Here a **legal entity** is a kind of group that can do things like:

- sign agreements
- own things like property.

Here a legal entity does **not** mean a person.

Legal entities are places like:

- **charities / charitable trusts**
- **incorporated societies**
- **Crown entities**
- businesses.

A **Crown entity** is a kind of government organisation.



A **charity / charitable trust** is an organisation that:

- supports people
- has to follow some rules made by the Government
- does not make money for themselves.



An **incorporated society**:

- has a goal like supporting disabled people
- can only spend money it makes on working towards that goal
- follows special **laws** about incorporated societies.

A **law** is a rule made by the Government that everybody must follow.



Applicants who have been selected to get funding must:

- agree to a **funding agreement**

and



- be able to do the work in the funding agreement by showing they have the:

- skills to do the work
- relationships with the right groups to support them to do the work.



Here an **applicant** is a person / group asking for funding.



A **funding agreement** sets out the rules about how the funding can be used for your solution.



To be able to sign a funding agreement you must:

- be a legal entity

or

- have a fundholder.



Funds cannot be paid to:

- a bank account belonging to 1 person
- an organisation that is not a legal entity.

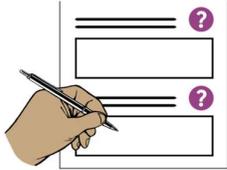


Funding can be paid to your organisation if it is a legal entity.



You must have a fundholder if your organisation is not a legal entity.

How to apply



Use an application form to apply for Access Activator funding.



There are 2 different application forms.



You need to use the right application form for the stage you want to apply for.



Use the idea stage application form at this **website**:

<https://bit.ly/4qZYNIG>



Use the scale stage application form at this **website**:

<https://bit.ly/4aDbjZJ>



Applicants can apply for funding for more than 1 solution.



You will need to use a new application form for each solution.



Please **email** your finished application form to:

outreach@whaikaha.govt.nz



Send your application to us before midnight on Sunday 29 March 2026.

What happens after you apply?



We will:

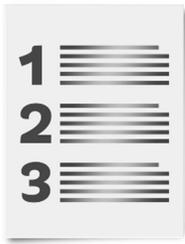
1. look at all the applications we get
2. check each one to make sure it matches the **selection criteria**
3. decide which applicants to put on a **shortlist**
4. ask applicants on the shortlist to have an online meeting to talk about their solution.



Selection means choosing something.



Here **criteria** are the things your solution must have.



Here a **shortlist** is the list of applicants we think could get funding to work on their solution.



We will choose who gets funding from the shortlist.



If you are on the shortlist we might need to ask you some more questions.



We will contact applicants by the end of **April 2026** to tell them our decision.

More information



There is more information on our website about Access Activator like:

- selection criteria
- application forms.

Go to our **website** to find this information:

<https://whaikaha.short.gy/qwc8>

This website is **not** in Easy Read.



You can also contact us if you have any questions about Access Activator by:

- **emailing** us at:

outreach@whaikaha.govt.nz

- **calling** us on: **0800 942 452**.



If you find it hard to use the phone the **New Zealand Relay** service is for people who are:

- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.



You can find out more about the New Zealand Relay service at:

www.nzrelay.co.nz

This information has been written by the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



The ideas in this document are not the ideas of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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