

School Sustainability and Resilience Fund



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Our organisation received funding from the SSRF last year. Can we apply for funding this year, or is there a standdown period?

You can apply for funding for a new project or an addition/extension to your existing project, providing that you have submitted your accountability report and receipts for your previous project. This reporting must have been accepted by Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Regional Council) staff.

We built garden beds last year, but we want to replant them with new vegetable crops and fresh compost, can we apply for funding for this?

No, ongoing maintenance of your project is your responsibility. However, you could apply for funding for something new like a rainwater tank to water your garden or a greenhouse to grow seedlings.

We do not have a teacher or parent at our school/centre who has the skills to help us build our project. Can we get an external contractor in?

Yes, you can pay for external labour; however, these costs can be no greater than 30% of the total project budget (i.e. if your total project costs \$10,000 (excl. GST), then your labour component should be no more than \$3,000 (excl. GST).

Can we use SSRF funding to pay existing teaching staff or kaiako?

Generally, kaiako or teacher's wages should be covered by the Ministry of Education, or the early childhood centre or tertiary institution's budget. An exception might be made if the teacher is an additional resource that is required to deliver the project or an aspect of the project. Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by Regional Council staff. If you are unsure, contact the [SSRF coordinator](#) **before** you submit your application.

How long do we have to complete our SSRF project?

Successful applicants should receive their funding by mid-July. Projects must then be completed by mid-December, giving you five months to implement your project. Please note: the specific date may change each year but will be confirmed on the Participate website and the funding guidelines. At this point, organisations also need to submit their accountability reports and invoices/receipts as evidence of their expenditure.



If our plans change, can we use SSRF funding for other things associated with the project?

We understand that sometime plans change due to circumstances outside your control. If you need to change your plan or budget (i.e. buy different or more/less items), you need to discuss this with the [SSRF Coordinator](#) **as soon as possible**. In most cases, we are happy for you to reallocate funding if the purchases still align with our funding criteria. However, your revised budget **will need to be approved by the Regional Council team before you make any new purchases**. If you purchase something without prior approval, there is a risk that you may be asked to refund the money if it is not an item/service that we would normally fund.

What happens if we have delivered our project and there is an underspend?

Get in touch with the [SSRF Coordinator](#) as soon as possible. Generally, we would prefer that you used the unspent funds for something else related to the project (i.e. more plants/trees/equipment). Please note that you must seek approval from the Regional Council team first, and if agreement cannot be reached on how to reallocate the funding, we may require that you refund the unspent portion of your funding.

Is there a deadline for when we can make changes to the approved project plan or budget?

Yes. Changes to the plan or budget need to be approved by Council Staff prior to 1 November. This is to allow time for you to implement the change and complete any purchases prior to the reporting falling due in mid-December.

What expenses are not eligible for SSRF funding?

- Projects that have already been delivered or items that have already been purchased (i.e. the Regional Council does not provide retrospective funding).
- Projects that have already received Regional Council funding through another fund (e.g. a planting project that has already received funding from another Regional Council fund such as the *Environmental Enhancement Fund*).
- Projects that are located outside of the Regional Council's [boundaries](#).
- Items that do not have a clear link to improving environmental sustainability or building resilience to climate change or natural hazards.
- Labour costs, where the cost is greater than 30% of the total project budget. The Regional Council will fund up to 30% and then you will need to fund the remaining labour costs from another funding source (e.g. fundraising, a separate funding application to a different funder)
- Hospitality (i.e. kai for 'opening' events, hosting visits from VIPs, councillors, Regional Council staff etc)
- Items/equipment associated with preparing or cooking kai from your māra kai (vegetable garden).
- Equipment or building materials that are being used for purely recreational or aesthetic purposes. For example, we don't fund playground equipment, sandpits, shade covers, board walks, fencing, decorative gardens that do not contain native plants or vegetables/fruit trees/herbs that can be eaten.
- Artwork created by an external or professional artist. However, you can apply for funding for materials for artwork or information displays produced by ākonga (students) that supports their learning and understanding of environmental sustainability or climate change/natural hazard resilience.



If you're unsure about any aspect of your budget or funding application, please contact the SSRF Coordinator (ssrfund@boprc.govt.nz) prior to submitting.