



Female Leadership Development Contestable Fund 2026/27

Overview

NZC is committed to developing the depth and capability of female leaders and female-focused leaders across the cricket network, through providing and facilitating development opportunities at all levels of the sport.

The contestable fund successfully commenced during the 2021-22 season, with x68 leadership development initiatives supported throughout New Zealand to date.

The contestable fund is open to applications from all Major Associations and District Associations. Affiliated cricket clubs and schools can also apply, with an endorsement from their relevant Major or District Association.

It's important to note that this fund aims to not only develop females, but anyone who is championing and developing female capability and female-focused initiatives. NZC acknowledges that we need to continue to develop champions across the network. Having a female-focus and improving the gender balance of cricket is the responsibility of everyone across the network.

Why?

Although cricket is moving in a positive trend towards increased female participation and visibility, females are still underrepresented.

Through encouraging a more diverse leadership group and developing female capability across a variety of off-field activities, we are contributing to the overall growth of our sport and making it more inclusive and accessible for all.

Objectives

The contestable fund has two key objectives;

- Support opportunities to develop leadership capabilities of female staff and female-focused staff within the cricket network
- Support the development and growth of initiatives focused on engaging more females in off-field leadership opportunities

Although the intention is for the contestable fund to flow through to positively impact female playing participation, please note that the contestable fund is focused on off-field leadership development initiatives.

How does it work?

The contestable fund is managed by NZC and aims to provide seed funding for new female leadership development initiatives delivered by MA/DA/Clubs and Schools. Consideration will be given to distribution of funds across the cricket network.

The intention is for initiatives to be provided with seed funding for 2 years, with the long-term aim of initiatives being self-funded by MA/DA/Clubs and Schools.

- Year 1: Initiatives are eligible to receive seed funding to cover up to 100% of their budgeted costs
- Year 2: Initiatives are eligible to receive seed funding to cover up to 50% of their budgeted costs
- Year 3: Initiatives are to be self-funded by the MA/DA/Club/School

Funding application timelines are below;

June 25, 2026: Overview and application information published

July 24, 2026: Applications close

Mid-August 2026: Successful applications announced

All applications that complete the application process and meet the criteria will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee.

Successful applications will receive a partnership and funding agreement with NZC, and be required to provide updates and report on their activity. They must also be willing to contribute and share information with the cricket network.

Criteria

- Applications for the 2026/27 season should include activity that falls between August 2026 to August 2027
- Application form must be completed online, and all requested documents provided
- Each MA or DA may submit multiple applications each season, but consideration will be given to distribution of funds across the cricket network
- Applications must be submitted by an MA or DA, or an affiliated club or school with endorsement from their relevant MA or DA
- Funding requests to contribute to staff salaries and/or wages will not be considered. The focus of the contestable fund is on developing leadership, not simply covering staffing costs.
- Successful applicants must be willing and able to complete reporting requirements, including any photo, video and content sharing requests

[Application forms can be completed HERE](#)

If you have any queries about the Female Leadership Development Contestable Fund, please email jess.davidson@nzc.nz