Te Puni Kōkiri
MINISTRY OF MĀORI DEVELOPMENT

19 August 2025 File Ref: OIA 50490

[redacted]

Tēnā koe [redacted]

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your information request dated 24 July 2025. Your request has been considered in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Your questions and our responses are as follows:

1. *"The name, role title, and employment status (contractor, secondment, or employee) of the full-time staff member who was appointed, funded, or assigned by Te Puni Kōkiri to support the Te Ara Tipuna project and Te Rūnanganui o Ngāti Porou, as referenced in publicly released reports and consultation documents".*

A full-time employee of Te Puni Kōkiri was provided to work on Te Ara Tipuna project between 28 November 2022 and 20 August 2023. In addition, other Te Puni Kōkiri employees provided assistance from time to time during the course of the project. This was in the context of the importance of the project to Ngāti Porou and the potential economic and other benefits to the wider region.

In relation to your request for *"the name, role title… of the full-time staff member"*, this information is withheld in full under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

In regard to information that has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, I am of the opinion that there are no countervailing considerations that make it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available at this time.

2. *"A copy of the individual's position description or scope of responsibilities, and any* relevant internal briefings or memos outlining their assignment to the project".

Two documents have been identified in scope of this part of your request. The documents and my decisions with regard to the release of the information are set out in the table attached as Appendix A.

We do not hold a copy of any position description specifically related to the role within the project Te Ara Tipuna. As we hold no information in scope of this particular request, your request is refused in full under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist.

Additionally, I am withholding the copy of the individual's position description within Te Puni Kōkiri, as given the size of the office this would identify the person. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

In regard to information that has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, I am of the opinion that there are no countervailing considerations that make it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available at this time.

3. *"The duration of their appointment, including start and end dates, and whether this role was based in Wellington, Tairāwhiti, or elsewhere".*

The duration of the arrangement with Te Rūnanganui o Ngāti Porou was from 28 November 2022 to 20 August 2023.

The role was based in Ikaroa-Rāwhiti.

4. *"Confirmation of which team or unit within TPK this individual was aligned to (e.g., Investment Team, Regional Partnerships, Māori Housing, etc)".*

The individual was employed within the Regional Partnerships and Operations Puni.

I trust my response satisfies your request.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that Te Puni Kōkiri publishes some of its OIA responses on its website, after the response is sent to the requester. The responses published are those that are considered to have a high level of public interest. We will not publish your name, address or contact details.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact us at oia@tpk.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi

Grace Smit
Hautū, Te Puni Rohe | Deputy Secretary, Regions

Appendix A – documents in scope of OIA request from [redacted] dated 24 July 2025

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1.	4 July 2023	Te Ara Tipuna June Update	Released with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act
2		Te Puni Kōkiri position description	Withheld in full under section 9(2)(a) of the Act

Te Ara Tipuna June Update — Te Rā 04/07/2023

Whakapānga kōnae

Ki a	Paula Rawiri, Deputy Secretary
Nā	9(2)(a) Acting Regional Director Cc 9(2)(a) Acting Regional Director
Meeting date	04 Hōngongoi 2023
Kaupapa	Te Ara Tipuna Update
Attachment/s	a. Te Ara Tipuna D1 Report b. Te Ara Tipuna D2 Report c. Te Ara Tipuna D3 Report

Purpose

1. This memorandum seeks to update you on Te Ara Tipuna, a project that Te Puni Kōkiri is supporting Te Runanganui o Ngati Porou (TRONPnui) with via investment and staffing.
2. Due to the significant impacts of successive severe weather events in Te Tairawhiti, the Te Ringa Hapai contract with TRONPnui has been extended from the original end date of June 30 to August 20, 2023.
3. 9(2)(a) has been working on this project since Monday 28 November 2022. Given the circumstances, and the amount of time and work that has been put into the project to date, she will continue to work on the project.
4. This will not interfere in the 9(2)(a)

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that you:

a. **Note**

i. 9(2)(a) will continue to work on Te Ara Tipuna project for the duration of the contract.

Background / Context

6. Te Ara Tipuna is an ambitious project that seeks to revitalise, reconnect, and regenerate the cultural wealth of a lively, healthy society of related communities, culturally fluent and capable, enterprising, and economically active, environmental protectors, and sustainers, in revitalised whānau, hapu and iwi relationships.
7. Te Ara Tipuna was presented by the Chairman of Te Runanganui o Ngati Porou, and Special Advisor to TRONPnui, at the Ngati Porou-Crown Summit in September 2022, to a receptive and enthusiastic Prime Minister, her Ministerial colleagues, and senior officials. Minister Jackson is fully supportive of the Project.

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8. In November 2022, in consequence of the Ngati Porou-Crown Summit, and in the spirit of co-production and partnering, it was agreed between Te Puni Kōkiri and Te Runanganui o Ngati Porou that:
   - 8.1 Te Puni Kōkiri will provide a full-time, single focus, staff member to the Project starting Monday 28 November 2022,
   - 8.2 TRONPnui will resource that staff member with the exclusive allocation of an appropriate vehicle and associated insurance and running costs, and
   - 8.3 Both parties will work together and individually, to support the successful development and implementation of the Project.
9. TPK has invested a total of $2.06m into the Project to date: $200,000 for the Business Case in June 2021, $1.765m for Phase 1 – Consents in November 2022 to June 2023, and a further $96,922 in a variation to the contract in June 2023.
10. Due to the significant impacts of successive severe weather events in Te Tairawh ti, the contract has been extended until August 20, 2023.

Alignment to Te Puni Kōkiri Strategy

11. Whenua Māori
    - 11.1 Te Ara Tipuna can be used as a vehicle to progress many of the Whenua Māori goals and aspirations.
    - 11.2 It is proposed to traverse over 400 land blocks, the majority of which are Māori freehold. Many of those blocks are ungoverned; a goal of the project is to work alongside the Whenua Māori Service and Māori Land Court to get every block governed along the Ara
    - 11.3 With 400 land blocks, and thousands of owners landowner engagement and development are integral to the project.
    - 11.4 Te Ara Tipuna will provide a platform for landowners to develop sustainable land-use opportunities and initiatives and enable their aspirations on their whenua.
12. Māori Economic Resilience
    - 12.1 A key layer of Te Ara Tipuna is the establishment of base infrastructure throughout Ngati Porou and Te Whanau a Apanui.
    - 12.2 The project has committed to prioritising progressive procurement in the building and maintenance of the trails, using local contractors and creating new employment for Māori. As such, the timeline for the project is 5-7 years given the extraordinary workload local contractors are under with Cyclone Recovery, and general resilience, works.
    - 12.3 Once established, the tracks will provide a foundation for local level enterprise; tourism ventures, hospitality, accommodation, and whenua-based businesses.
    - 12.4 The forecasted increase in business and visitors, and growth in economy, will provide greater opportunities for tangata whenua to move home. Therefore, an even greater need for housing will follow.

Risks / Implementation Issues

13. Status quo.

Next Steps (if different from recommendations)

14. 9(2)(a) [redacted] will continue to work on Te Ara Tipuna until completion of contract on August 20, 2023.

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