



Hon Aupito William Sio
Minister for Pacific Peoples

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Supporting Pacific Peoples through a COVID-19 recovery plan

The Minister for Pacific Peoples Aupito William Sio says the Government is backing Pacific Peoples with a \$195 million Pacific package to support the recovery and rebuild of Pacific communities from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Pacific communities are always among the hardest hit whenever there’s an economic downturn and Budget 2020 will help to rebuild the Pacific economy so that Pacific peoples aren’t left behind, and missing out on jobs and business opportunities.

Budget 2020 will also help reset how we engage with Pacific churches and community organisations, generate more community innovation, embrace digital education and build on the gains from the 2019 Budget as we fight against COVID-19.

“I am a firm believer that Pacific peoples themselves have to lead the work of recovery so they can quickly provide security for our families with sustainable incomes, jobs and homes to keep everyone safe,” says Aupito William Sio.

Funding for Pacific focused initiatives announced in Budget 2020 include:

- A Pasifika Culture and Heritage Fund to enable festivals to continue to provide platforms of opportunities to the festival ecosystem (\$12.0 million)
- Progressing the establishment of a New Zealand Fale Malae (\$10.0 million)
- Toloa - Empowering Pacific participation in STEM (\$4.9 million)
- Expansion of Tupu Aotearoa programme across New Zealand (\$13.9 million)
- Developing Pacific community content (\$1.7 million)
- The Pacific Aotearoa Community COVID-19 Recovery Fund (\$3.0 million)
- The Auckland Pacific Skills Shift – an initiative that supports Auckland Pacific peoples in low skilled precarious work, to transition into quality employment (\$22.1 million)
- Pacific education initiatives will be announced in the near future by the Associate Minister of Education, Hon Jenny Salesa (up to \$80.2 million)
- Improving housing for Pacific families and communities (up to \$41.3 million)

Building and Construction Minister Jenny Salesa says, “Budget 2020 will help move more Pacific workers into more quality jobs including in building and construction”.

“The Auckland Pacific Skills Shift will partner with Auckland businesses to help 5000 Pacific people gain micro-credentials on the job in industries like building and construction. This programme takes a whanau and community-centred approach to overcome the barriers many Pacific peoples experience in moving to higher-skilled jobs.

Associate Arts, Culture and Heritage Minister, and Associate Minister for Pacific Peoples Carmel Sepuloni says, “Pacific festivals are an integral part of New Zealand’s cultural calendar, ensuring that people stay connected to their language and culture, and supporting all New Zealanders to experience what makes New Zealand a unique place in the Pacific. It is important we ensure their sustainability going forward and to recognise the significant part that Pacific communities play in supporting New Zealand’s overall arts, culture and heritage sector”.

“We have committed to supporting the establishment of a New Zealand Fale Malae based in Wellington. This supports the contribution of the Fale Malae Community Trust and the investment from Victoria University of Wellington to date. It recognises that there is an opportunity to promote New Zealand’s Pacific heritage by creating a Pasifika-focused space to be shared and enjoyed by all New Zealanders. The Ministry of Arts Culture and Heritage will work with key stakeholders to commence detailed planning of the feasibility of this project as soon as is practicable,” Carmel Sepuloni said.

“Rebuilding our economy needs to provide Pacific peoples with the opportunities for redeployment, skills development training, and business engagement so they can quickly recover and support their families. The Tupu Aotearoa programme is a vital part of that rebuilding process and this programme will be expanded across New Zealand into new regions and will extend services to Pacific people of all ages.

“The Pacific Aotearoa Lalanga Fou Goals is the guiding template that the Government has used to ensure the Pacific package for 2020 strengthens the foundation we’ve already started building from previous budgets. It is now more important than ever before, that we work quickly and at pace, to achieve our collective vision of a confident, thriving, prosperous and resilient Pacific peoples,” Aupito William Sio said.

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