



18 July 2024

Ms Wendy McGuinness
Chief Executive
McGuinness Institute Te Hononga Waka
Email: wmcg@mcguinnessinstitute.org

Ref: DOIA 2425-0088

Dear Ms McGuinness

On 8 July 2024, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) accepted the transfer of the following part of your request to Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora under the Official Information Act 1982:

“Question 10: How much has 'Kiwi Vax' cost to date, and how much more will be invested?
See www.thepost.co.nz/nz-news/350201207/whatever-happened-kiwi-covid-vaccine.”

How much has 'Kiwi Vax' cost to date

MBIE provided \$12 million excluding GST in funding for COVID-19 vaccine research for 29 months to October 2022 to the Vaccine Alliance Aotearoa New Zealand (the Vaccine Alliance), a consortium led by the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research (the Malaghan Institute) with Victoria University of Wellington, University of Otago, ESR, AgResearch, South Pacific Sera and Avalia Immunotherapies. The contract holder was the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research. This amount comprised:

- In 2020, \$10 million excluding GST appropriated through the Strategic Science Investment Fund – Programmes (SSIF Programmes) in Vote Business, Science and Innovation to support New Zealand-based vaccine research that could contribute to global efforts, build relationships and support early access to a vaccine, in line with the COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy (<https://www.covid19.govt.nz/assets/Proactive-Releases/proactive-release-2020-june/PAPER-COVID-19-Vaccine-Strategy.pdf>)
- In 2021, a further \$2 million to maintain vaccine development capability, using SSIF Programmes funds primarily from COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy funding.

The \$12 million MBIE funding contributed to:

- the pre-clinical assessment of six vaccine candidates including KiwiVax
- five publications
- vaccine-related intellectual property
- a clinical study characterising and monitoring how New Zealanders respond to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine
- the development of RNA technology including research-grade manufacture in New Zealand.

The Vaccine Alliance estimates that it used approximately \$3.9 million of that funding for activities specifically directed to KiwiVax, including to:

- determine mechanism of action
- conduct pre-clinical efficacy studies
- conduct pre-clinical GLP toxicology studies

- secure access to a commercially available adjuvant
- develop GMP manufacture processes
- satisfy domestic and international regulatory requirements.

The Malaghan Institute also secured philanthropic funding to help support the Vaccine Alliance activities.

This contract ended in October 2022. MBIE is not currently investing funds into the Vaccine Alliance, or contributing to the costs of clinical trials of KiwiVax.

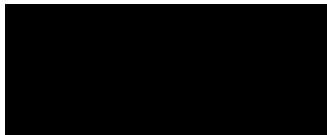
How much more will be invested

In a separate contract for Independent Research Organisation capability, MBIE is currently funding the Malaghan Institute a total of \$7.122 million excluding GST for two years to June 2026 to support critical research capability. The contract includes an objective to attract new non-government investment into New Zealand-based health biotech research, development, manufacturing and commercialisation programmes, and this objective includes milestones for the Malaghan Institute to evaluate the commercial potential of a COVID vaccine candidate post Phase 1 safety study, and determine next steps for commercial development of a COVID vaccine. We expect funds used for this purpose will be approximately \$20,000.

I trust that you find the information helpful.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, or if you require any further assistance, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Manager Strategic Investments
Science System Investment and Performance
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment