

## **Environmental Legal Assistance Fund Advisory Panel members**

### **Background**

The ELA Fund was established in 2001, primarily to assist groups to participate effectively in resource management processes. The ELA Fund is for not-for-profit groups advocating for matters of environmental public interest. Funding enables applicants to participate more effectively and efficiently in resource management processes at the Environment Court, higher courts or boards of inquiry.

Funding is available to cover the time and expenses of legal representatives and/or expert witnesses used in preparing for, resolving and/or presenting cases.

More information about the ELA fund can be found on our website:

<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/funding/environmental-legal-assistance-fund/about-fund>

### **Functions of ELA Fund Advisory Panel**

The purpose of the Panel is to provide the independent assessment of applications (against the ELA Fund's criteria). The Panel makes recommendations to the Ministry for the Environment, who makes the final decision.

A panel member's role includes undertaking written evaluations of funding applications and leading discussions at Panel meetings. Members therefore require an excellent understanding of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), national direction instruments, local government plans, and recent case law.

### **Panel skill requirements**

It is desirable that candidates have a mixture of the following competencies:

- Understanding of proceedings in the Environment Court
- Experience in RMA cases
- Up to date knowledge and experience of case law
- Understanding of iwi/hapū environment issues and tikanga knowledge
- Preparation and presentation of material as an expert witness
- Involvement with environmental community groups
- Understanding of likely costs for a case/ hearing
- Experience of funding schemes
- Breadth of perspective (ie. primarily National or Local)
- Economics/Understanding of the Business Environment
- Experience in sitting on boards/panels

### **Process for appointing Panel members**

The Ministry for the Environment is responsible for making recommendations to the Minister for the Environment on nominees to the Minister for the Environment. Members are appointed by the Minister for the Environment.

Nominations must be made by **5pm Friday 15 May 2020**. It is expected that the Minister will appoint the new ELA Fund Panel members in June 2020.

The Ministry acknowledges the COVID-19 environment we are working in and would like to reassure you we will pursue these appointments in a safe way at all levels of the COVID-19 alert system. Our people are working from home and any engagement with potential candidates will be in a contactless way.

### **Remuneration**

Remuneration is set in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework. Each member receives an honorarium for their participation and preparation for Panel meetings.

### **Panel Meetings**

Members are expected to attend all Panel meetings. There are a total of six meetings (a mixture of teleconference and face-to-face) on average throughout the financial year. Dates are usually set before the end of the next financial year with the consideration of Panel member availability.

All meetings will be held via teleconference or a form of online medium until further notice is given regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. All Panel members must ensure they have internet access.

### **Contact information**

On behalf of the Minister for the Environment, the Ministry for the Environment is facilitating the application process. For inquiries please email Robyn Paiti ([ela.fund@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ela.fund@mfe.govt.nz)) or phone on 022 076 3667. Please indicate 'ELA Fund Appointments' in the subject line.

Nominations close at **5pm Friday 15 May 2020.**