



Pauahi Foundation

Māhuahua Ka Lae Research Fellowship

Cohort 3: September 2026 - December 2027

KA HIKINA: OVERVIEW

THE CONCEPT OF MĀHUAHUA KA LAE

We interpret Māhuahua Ka Lae as the proliferation of Hawaiian intellect and wisdom. The imagery of the coral exemplifies the intention and impact of the kind of proliferation we seek to catalyze. Extensive reef systems are built from a single polyp and nurture multitudes of fish species. The well-being of our ocean and ourselves relies heavily upon this critical reef-building process.

Māhuahua Ka Lae aims to mimic this process within and beyond the research community. The hāpapa we aim to contribute to is an increased prevalence and influence of Native Hawaiian perspectives, knowledge, practices, and approaches through the overlapping of traditional and Western academic research. The proliferation of 'ike and process into our practices and communities contributes to improving the well-being of our lāhui, Hawai'i, and honua.

In recognizing the need for scholarship and research to better align with the Native Hawaiian worldview in both form and function, the Pauahi Foundation puts forth the opportunity to immerse into the Māhuahua Ka Lae Research Fellowship.

THE MĀHUAHUA KA LAE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

The Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship is stewarded by 'Ōiwi Leadership Institute, whose work supports and fosters transformative growth in forming, nurturing, and sustaining an 'ōiwi lens by strengthening skills, abilities, and behaviors grounded in kuana'ike Hawai'i (Native Hawaiian Perspective). Through the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship, we create a unique environment that supports and fosters 'ōiwi leadership practices **through the medium of Hawaiian research** to serve and strengthen the lāhui, Hawai'i, and the world.

By investing in and elevating 'ike Hawai'i, the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship seeks to make significant short-term strides through trailblazing, innovative research and the dissemination of 'ike for the benefit of kanaka, 'ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. Long-term, systemic change are also advanced through well-supported emerging Native Hawaiian practitioners and scholars poised to move into leadership roles in their practices and disciplines. More specifically, Māhuhua Ka Lae aims to manifest the following intentions:

- Increase access to past and present 'ōiwi-based knowledge and practices that inform and influence our ability to improve the well-being of our lāhui and Hawai'i.
- Forward 'ōiwi-led research and scholarship in traditional 'ōiwi contexts and Western academic settings, along with the integration of both, as deemed appropriate, from a kuana'ike Hawai'i.
- Nurture traditional learning contexts that enable mentoring of the most promising practitioners to achieve a level of competence ensuring the continuity and further elevation of that practice in future generations.
- Advance 'ōiwi perspectives, knowledge, practices, and approaches in academic settings by creating pathways for Native Hawaiians to enter and complete PhD degrees or other terminal degrees requiring substantial research.
- Provide vehicles and venues that generate interest in, application and adoption of, and normalization of compelling, peer-supported research findings and recommendations to create systemic change to improve the well-being of our lāhui, Hawai'i, and our honua.

The Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship is a professional learning opportunity designed to support the further growth of researchers as 'ōiwi leaders by building upon the research skills that Fellows already have and by enhancing the research experience and the potential contribution of their research to our lāhui, Hawai'i, and honua. This Fellowship is not an introduction to research where you are learning how to conduct research. Therefore, the expectation is that applicants have a strong Hawaiian cultural foundation and have prior experience with research processes. Given the intentions and relatively short time frame of this Fellowship, our Māhuhua Ka Lae Fellows are ready to engage in this level of advanced research and are:

- compelled to conduct research that is grounded in kuana'ike Hawai'i
- proficient in research methodology, formal writing, and analysis
- critical thinkers, detail-oriented, collaborative, organized, reflective, and skilled communicators.

Unlike a typical research grant or award, where funding is the primary focus and the researcher works independently, the Māhuahua Ka Lae Research Fellowship prioritizes the importance of the research community. For optimal success in this Fellowship experience, a confident and open mindset is essential. Embracing a willingness to be part of the collective is fundamental. Trusting in the well-designed process established undoubtedly supports and elevates the journey. Engaging fully in the process is crucial to overcoming the isolation that can accompany research. Engaging with this community means putting yourself out there to contribute meaningfully to the many discussions and learning activities. It is giving and receiving feedback and taking full advantage of all the various supports the Fellowship offers. The convenings are a means for Fellows to get excited about and be inspired by the work of their multi-generational cohort members, to see different philosophies, perspectives, and approaches, and to work collaboratively as a cohort. The modeling of how 'ike Hawai'i & kuana'ike Hawai'i exist in the research space provides a clear vision of what we, as kānaka, want and need to see in research spaces. Through Fellows' open sharing of self, experience, and perspective, valued ideation, feedback, and networking are gained in support of each other's research journeys.

Up to eight Fellowship gifts are given, with financial support ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000, based on the nature of the research project.

KA LEO KUA'ANA: COHORT 1 PERSPECTIVES

In addition to the many touchpoints along the way, we sat with each of our inaugural Fellows toward the end of their Māhuahua Ka Lae journey to gain their insights into the experience. We share some of their perspectives here to give you a better idea of what you can expect directly from those who lived it.

The Fellowship Experience of Māhuahua Ka Lae

"The hale, the hālau, to create generative leaders for our community should come from within our community. What Māhuahua Ka Lae is doing is a much bigger ask because you're generating various leaders for our lāhui, not just the academic kine, not just the next generation of masters of a cultural art/knowledge system, or our next generation of community-grounded leaders. You're generating all of those things. And no other program is doing that right now."

"It was an experience like no other, and I think in so many good ways. "It created that space where we were able to gather and, like 'ike bombs dropping left & right & us being in that, that or normalizing that space. You know, we don't have spaces like this or conversations like this."

"The research is key; the process was even better because it allowed us to communicate, allowed us to network, allowed us to introduce our ideas & bounce off our ideas off of everybody. Essentially creating leaders within ourselves."

Advice for Cohort 2 Applicants & Fellows

“From the beginning, people need to understand this is an investment. It will only be better for the fellows to invest more time in the process and in conversation with people. In each Kalaeloa, they have to hō’ea mai me ka mākaukau. You’re not just coming here as a passive participant.”

“Are you the right person for this Fellowship? Are you gonna be as open as everyone else? Cause it’s not just self-service.”

“Don’t bite off more than you can chew & in like the first 3 months, you’re like, oh no.”

“Bring the people who are the hammers around you & let them kinda like (not in a negative connotation) but hammering you down like a nail, being willing to take the feedback and welcoming it early.”

KA MALAE O KA ‘IMI NA‘AUAO: RESEARCH CONTEXT

PRIORITIZING HAWAIIAN RESEARCH

Māhuhua Ka Lae intentionally views research through an ‘ōiwi lens and, therefore, prioritizes a research paradigm grounded in this kuana‘ike Hawai‘i. As part of the Fellowship, our inaugural cohort collectively worked to begin articulating what Hawaiian research looks like. The resulting draft underwent an initial paka at the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Summit in July 2024, the findings of which called for more focused dialogue to ho‘okā’oi the current draft. As in any other development of theory or framework, this process takes many more years and is something that Cohort 2 has been working to elevate. Cohort 2 will present the next iteration of Ho‘olaupa‘i at the 2026 Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Summit. In the meantime, we honor the work of Cohort 1 by offering their framing (Table 1) as a common point of reference for applicants to further understand the kind of research we prioritize in prospective applications for this Research Fellowship.

Table 1. Ho‘olaupa‘i Hawaiian Research Framework (2024, Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship Cohort 1)

Hawaiian Research:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● is a situated process of relational accountability to ‘ike that is grounded in akua, ‘āina, and kānaka ● ensures longevity and integrity to the succession of ‘ike kupuna that is renewed from generation to generation. 	
Hawaiian Research requires:	
<i>pilina akua, ‘āina, kānaka</i>	Relational accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ hierarchy ○ what we do/research strengthens our pilina
<i>mo‘okū‘auhau – ku‘u ēwe, ku‘u piko, ku‘u iwi, ku‘u koko</i>	Relation of you to your immediate kuleana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ linked to pilina akua, ‘āina, kānaka ○ hones pilina to the ‘ohana/practice level
<i>ma ka hana ka ‘ike</i>	Empirical knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ knowing is in the doing, doing is in the knowing

<i>makawalu</i>	Our analytical lens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o looking beyond the obvious allows for the flexibility of the research o deconstruction & reconstruction
<i>‘imi na’auao</i>	Process through which we gain wisdom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o knowledge and wisdom are not the same o iterative process of learning, applying learning to get to new learning
<i>na kākou, no kākou</i>	It’s not all about you as the researcher; what we do reaffirms pilina & mo’okū’auhau. It’s by us for us.

RESEARCH PATHWAYS

To ensure the inclusion of knowledge-seeking and knowledge generation that undoubtedly exists in our Hawaiian practices and communities, as well as in the university context, the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship offers three research pathways for applicants to pursue: **Practitioner-Applied Research, Community-Applied Research, and Dissertation Research**. Please read through each pathway description carefully to determine the best fit for you at this time. Other than the Dissertation Pathway, one research project may have more than one Fellow. Each research project is expected to be completed within one year (Sep. 2026 – Sep. 2027). The dissemination component must be completed by December 2027 (see the Engagement Calendar in the Fellowship Expectations section).

Table 2. Practitioner-Applied Research Pathway Overview

Practitioner-Applied Research Pathway	
<i>You may apply as an individual or as a research team. If applying as a pair or team, all members must fully engage in all expectations of this Research Fellowship.</i>	
<i>Pathway Purpose</i>	The Practitioner-Applied research pathway empowers our Hawaiian cultural practitioners who have dedicated their lives to their practice to delve further into the realm of research that contributes to the perpetuation of their practice.
<i>Researcher Eligibility Conditions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant(s) is/are recognized as an established Hawaiian cultural practitioner by a master of their practice • Applicant(s) is/are invested in designing and conducting a formal research project that leads to the formulation of heightened ‘ike
<i>Research Focus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts that ensure the long-term perpetuation of the area of expertise relevant to the practice • Deepens or elevates the practices, knowledge, and approaches used in the area of expertise relevant to the practice

Researcher Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant(s) possess all three Māhūahua Ka Lae Research Fellow attributes (see pp. 2-3). • The applicant(s) can fully commit to the expectations of this Research Fellowship (e.g., readiness for engaging in a collective learning space, attending all sessions, proposed research fits within the given timeframe, etc.). • The readiness of applicant(s) to apply their expertise to fulfill kuleana impacting other kānaka, natural environments, or cultural contexts relevant to their area of expertise • The applicant(s) have considered which aspects of their studies and research can be shared with various circles to perpetuate and advance their area of expertise (e.g., within their own pā or hālau, among trusted practitioners, with their ‘ohana, in their communities, with Hawaiian educational entities, etc.). • Has developed a sound, advanced research project (not a teaching or training program that is typical of a program grant) to study that addresses the pathway focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear focal question, challenge, or opportunity to be impacted ○ Intended planned outcome or impact ○ Means by which the planned research creates the envisioned outcome or impact
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Table 3. Community-Applied Research Pathway Overview

Community-Applied Research Pathway	
<p><i>You may apply as an individual or as a research team.</i> <i>If applying as a pair or team, all members must fully engage in all expectations of this Research Fellowship.</i></p>	
Pathway Purpose	In recognition of the great research work that is happening by, for and with our communities, the Community-Applied Research Pathway empowers one or more community researchers to further enhance their work through a Hawaiian-centric, collective research Fellowship experience.
Researcher Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has strong ties to the community of which the research focuses, includes, or affects, and has a good record of working in, with, and for the community • Is invested in designing and conducting a formal research project that lends to the formulation of heightened ‘ike
Research Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research is of high relevance and impact to a given Hawaiian geographical, cultural, or demographic community • Research aims to identify/contribute to solutions, recommendations, processes, etc., that address the community’s needs

Researcher Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant(s) possess(es) all three Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellow attributes (see pp. 2-3). • The applicant(s) can fully commit to the expectations of this Research Fellowship (e.g., readiness for engaging in a collective learning space, attending all sessions, proposed research fits within the given timeframe, etc.). • The applicant’s ability to exercise the kuleana to address the focus of the planned research (e.g., has approval from/access to the community of focus, etc.) • Has a sound research plan to study and address the pathway focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear focal question, challenge, or opportunity to be impacted ○ Intended planned outcome or impact ○ Means by which the planned research will create the envisioned outcome or impact
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Table 4. Dissertation Research Pathway Overview

Dissertation Research Pathway	
Pathway Purpose	The Dissertation Research Pathway provides doctoral students an opportunity to be a part of a collective experience focused on a Hawaiian approach to research where the development/strengthening of a kuana’ike Hawai’i lens lends to strengthening their knowledge, skills, research and the impact of their research beyond the university context.
Researcher Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctoral candidate status within a research-focused doctoral program at an accredited institution (Candidate status means coursework is completed, and the candidate is solely in the dissertation phase.) • Dissertation research is in a phase where learning from this Fellowship can be incorporated into the research methodology • Applicant is invested in designing and conducting a formal research project that lends to the formulation of heightened ‘ike
Research Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of a dissertation proposal involving research that advances the well-being of our lāhui and Hawai’i
Researcher Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant possesses all three Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellow attributes (see pp. 2-3). • The applicant can fully commit to the expectations of this Research Fellowship (e.g., readiness for engaging in a collective learning space, attending all sessions, proposed research fits within the given timeframe, etc.). • Readiness to successfully accomplish the proposed research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deep familiarity with the knowledge base related to the proposed research ○ Completed preliminary research relevant to the further expansion of the research proposed ○ An ability to engage in the proposed research (e.g., access to ‘āina, access to collections or archives necessary to conduct the research, informed and willing participants or informants) • Willingness and autonomy to integrate kuana’ike Hawai’i into the research methodology

Eligibility for all applicants

- ❖ Resident of the state of Hawai‘i.
- ❖ All applicants must be 18 years old or older at the time of application.

EXPECTATIONS

Fellows are expected to fully engage as active participants through in-person Kalaeloa sessions, individual Ko‘o sessions, individual and group work, the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Summit, the dissemination of ‘ike generated through research, and Kūkā Pani sessions.

Kalaeloa

Manifesting the stretch & growth of thinking is the intention of these two-day, in-person sessions, catalyzed by new learning, dialogue, processing, and reflection. The concept and practice of paka (constructive critique) will be a means to engage in collegial discussions intended to enhance the research experience and elevate the final research outcome. These sessions allow this Fellowship community to share progress and receive supportive guidance and feedback from peers and experts. These Kalaeloa sessions are held on the various islands of our Fellows, so most sessions entail travel.

Ko‘o Sessions

The Ko‘o sessions are one-to-one, one-hour checkpoint sessions (virtual or in-person) with the Fellowship Director as extensions of Kalaeloa, to support bringing to fruition the potential of your research project. Four Ko‘o sessions are scheduled throughout the Fellowship experience, but additional sessions can be added based on the Fellow’s needs.

Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Summit (‘Aha)

This invitational ‘Aha gathers practitioner, community, and university researchers from across the pae‘aina to engage in the rich, productive, and actionable exchange of ‘ike to collectively deepen our understanding of Hawaiian research. All Fellows attend the two-day ‘Aha and present their research at the summit as part of the Fellowship’s dissemination process. Depending on the host island, ‘Aha may entail travel for certain Fellows. To get a better idea of what ‘Aha entails, you can access the 2024 Mo‘olelo ‘Aha Māhuhua Ka Lae (Proceedings Document) through the Waihona site (<https://waihona.net/#/>) in the Māhuhua Ka Lae Collection.

Dissemination

A primary goal of Māhuhua Ka Lae is to generate interest in, application and adoption of, and normalization of compelling, peer-supported research findings and recommendations to create systemic change that improves the well-being of our lāhui, Hawai‘i, and our honua. Toward that end, Māhuhua Ka Lae Fellows commit to taking steps to disseminate and proliferate the research conducted. Through Kalaeloa and Ko‘o sessions, each Fellow develops and implements a dissemination plan according to the expectations below (Table 5).

Table 5. Dissemination Overview

Practitioner-Applied Research Pathway	Community-Applied Research Pathway	Dissertation Research Pathway
<p>Conduct two levels of tailored, differentiated sharing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a trusted circle of people associated with the area of expertise • a larger circle of those interested in the area of expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct at least one in-person presentation for the targeted, impacted community that conveys the research methods, findings, impacts, & recommendations to build momentum around any progress made • Engage in at least one formal meeting with appropriate community leaders, policymakers, or other relevant influencers & powerholders whose areas of purview could be improved by the adoption of the research recommendations 	<p>Conduct two levels of tailored, differentiated sharing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within & beyond academe (may include publishing, public presentations) • through engagement with native Hawaiian communities
<p>Create & submit a single document or set of documents that transmit the publicly shareable aspects of your research. <u>Educators</u> are the primary audience for these documents, for use in their classroom or for their own professional development. All documents will be housed in the Māhuhua Ka Lae Collection of Waihona site (waihona.net/#/).</p>		

Kūkā Pani

Kūkā Pani is held after the ‘Aha & once dissemination is complete. This session intends not only to “pani” our work together but to get a good sense of the Māhuhua Ka Lae journey from the pā nānā of the researcher. Valuable insight is gained through these face-to-face conversations that lend to the continual ho’okā’oi of Māhuhua Ka Lae. The Fellowship Director travels to the researcher’s location for the Kūkā Pani. The session typically lasts approximately two hours.

Engagement Calendar

The table below (Table 6) lists the dates for the various engagements that are aligned with the trek of the sun. The Fellowship begins near Piko O Wākea 2026 and sets near Ala Polohiwa A Kanaloa 2027. The expectation is that Māhuhua Ka Lae Fellows fully attend all engagements, so be sure you are available for these dates.

Table 6. Fellowship Engagement Calendar

Engagement	2026	Engagement	2027
Kalaeloa 1	September 26 - 27	Kalaeloa 2	February 27 - 28
Ko’o Sessions	November	Ko’o Sessions	May, August, and Oct.
		Kalaeloa 3	June 26 - 27
		‘Aha Prep (virtual)	October
		‘Aha	October 23 - 24
		Kalaeloa 4	November 6
		Kūkā Pani	Nov. / Dec.
		Final Report	December 20

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Researchers will maintain all intellectual property rights. We assert no claim of whole or partial rights to such intellectual property. Researchers are encouraged to follow established means (whether through copyright or other cultural practices) to safeguard, as desired, their intellectual property.

GENERAL FUNDING INFORMATION

- ❖ Fellowships from the Pauahi Foundation are an extension of Ke Ali’i Pauahi’s legacy of care. This support is received as a gift, rooted in trust, aloha & shred kuleana to uplift learners and their ‘ohana. We encourage recipients to receive this gift with gratitude and intention, using what is truly needed and sharing forward Pauahi’s care through time, service, and stewardship of other learners and ‘ohana.
- ❖ A portion or all of the gift may be taxable; please consult with your tax advisor.
 - The gift is non-transferable to another gift recipient.
- ❖ A portion of the gift is intended to be used toward the Fellowship participation conditions (See budget component in the application process section).
- ❖ Disbursement of gift funding will be made upon reasonable progress and participation in the designated checkpoints.
- ❖ A gift recipient may receive funding from only one Pauahi Foundation program during a gift year.
- ❖ The Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship gift is limited to a specified period of time of one (1) gift year. Recipients are not eligible for another year of funding.
- ❖ Preference is given to applicants of Hawaiian ancestry to the extent permitted by law. Additional information about ancestry verification is available at <http://www.pauahi.org/verification>.

APPLICATION & SELECTION TIMELINE

In effort to ensure clarity and best fit, we are offering two different types of virtual support sessions: Hālāwai ‘Ai Kole and Ko’o. While these are optional, they are highly encouraged for potential applicants.

- ❖ The *Hālāwai ‘Ai Kole* is an orientation session about the Fellowship and the application process. A recording of the Hālāwai ‘Ai Kole will be made available through the Māhuhua Ka Lae page on the Pauahi Foundation site (<https://pauahi.org/mkl-fellowship>).
- ❖ There are two *Ko’o* sessions as a follow-up to the Hālāwai ‘Ai Kole, where you can share about your research project and pose additional questions about the Fellowship and the application process. These are not individual sessions. The Ko’o sessions are not recorded.

The timeline below outlines the important dates throughout the application process. For more information, go to the Pauahi Foundation site (<https://pauahi.org/mkl-fellowship>) or e-mail us at scholarships@pauahi.org.

Table 7. Application & Selection Timeline

Kaulua : Lā’aukūkahi March 6, 2026 @ 12:00 pm (noon)	Cohort 3 of the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship Announced
Kaulua : ‘Olepau March 11, 2026 @ 12:00 pm (noon)	Application OPEN
Kaulua : ‘Olekūlua March 17, 2026 @ 5:30 – 6:30 pm	Hālāwai ‘Ai Kole: Virtual Orientation Session (optional) <i>Zoom Meeting ID: 827 5478 2072</i> <i>Passcode: MKL3</i>
Nana : Hoaka Mar. 19, 2026 @ 5:30 – 7:30 pm Nana : ‘Olekūkahi Mar. 24 @ 11:00 am – 1:00 pm	Ko’o: Project Calibration Sessions (optional) <i>Zoom Meeting ID: 873 6503 7049</i> <i>Passcode: kakoo3</i>
Nana : Lā’aupau April 6, 2026 @ 12:00 pm (noon)	Application CLOSES * No late or incomplete applications are considered
Welo : Lono May 13, 2026	Notification of Finalists
Ikiiki : Kāloakūlua - Kāne June 8 - 10, 2026	Phase 2: Finalists’ Presentations (virtual)
Hinaia’ele’ele Late June 2026	Fellowship Award Notification

KE KA'INA NOI: APPLICATION PROCESS

Phase 1: Fellowship Application

Application deadline is kau ka lā i ka lolo - 12:00 pm (noon) on Monday, April 6, 2026. The electronic application is available through the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship page on the Pauahi Foundation site (<https://pauahi.org/mkl-fellowship>). The link goes live on March 11, 2026, at 12 noon. The application consists of three components: (1) articulation of interest, (2) budget, and (3) affirmation of support.

If you are applying as a pair or group, you will submit one application, but each applicant responds to prompts 1-4 individually on the articulation of interest section of the application. You may submit one budget, and one affirmation of support (see additional information below).

Component 1 – Articulation of Interest

Each prompt will appear separately in the application. Please note the word counts for each prompt. Quality applications speak well to the following:

1. Introduction of the applicant(s) explaining the personal connection and relevance of this research project to their future goals and contributions of the proposed research to our lāhui. *(350 words maximum)*
 - For pairs or groups, each applicant will add their own response to this prompt on the application form.
2. Explanation that evidences the applicant(s) having the attributes of a Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellow. Please refer to the Māhuhua Ka Lae Fellowship section of this overview for additional information. *(400 words maximum)*
 - For pairs or groups, each applicant will add their own response to this prompt on the application form.
3. Articulation of applicant(s) readiness to engage in the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship. Please refer to Research Pathways & Fellowship Expectations sections of this overview for additional information. *(400 words maximum)*
 - For pairs or groups, each applicant will add their own response to this prompt on the application form.
4. Eligibility of the *researchers* for the selected research pathway, and of *the research project* for the intentions and focus of the chosen research pathway. Please refer to the Research Pathways & Fellowship Expectations sections of this overview for additional information. *(450 words maximum)*
 - For pairs or groups, each applicant will add their own response to this prompt on the application form.
5. Explanation of how the research project aligns with the research focus of the selected research pathway. Please refer to Research Pathways section of this overview for additional information. *(350 words maximum)*
6. Research project overview – Research question, methodology, proposed knowledge sources, intended outcome (hua), with explanation of how the methodology would yield that hua *(450 words maximum)*

7. Explanation of how the proposed research aligns with the intentions of Māhūahua Ka Lae. Please refer to [Māhūahua Ka Lae Fellowship section](#) of this overview for additional information. (450 words maximum)
8. Explanation of how the proposed research and methodology align with the Ho'olaupa'i Hawaiian Research Framework. (450 words maximum). Please refer to the [Prioritizing Hawaiian Research section](#) of this overview for additional information.
9. A timeline with milestones to ensure the on-time completion of research and dissemination. (300 words maximum)

Component 2 – Budget

Be prepared to provide a high-level budget that identifies the anticipated expenses of your research project from start to dissemination in the following areas: **research, travel, dissemination, and other**. Include approximately \$8,000 per researcher for travel expenses (airfare, car, lodging, etc.) to attend all Fellowship engagements ([refer to Fellowship Expectations section](#)).

Component 3 – Affirmation of Support

Interested applicants will provide the name and email address of someone who can affirm the applicant's work and readiness to engage in this type of Fellowship program. [Pairs or groups may use the same affirmation of support if the supporter has a relationship with and can speak well to each applicant's eligibility for this Research Fellowship.](#) **We recommend that you have a conversation with the person prior** so that they are aware of and can expect an email. A separate, automated email is sent to the identified supporter once an application has been completed and submitted.

You receive a notification once the Affirmation of Support has been submitted. Applications are **not** considered complete until the Affirmation of Support has been submitted. **Affirmation(s) of Support is/are due by kau ka lā i ka lolo – 12:00 pm (noon) on Monday, Apr. 6, 2026. We highly recommend not waiting until the deadline to ensure that your affirmation(s) of support are submitted.** Your application will be considered incomplete if we do not receive your affirmation of support by the deadline.

Below are the prompts that are sent to the identified supporter. You may share these prompts in advance. Please note the word counts for each prompt.

1. Please tell us a little about yourself (your name, work/practice, etc.). (150 words maximum)
2. Describe your relationship to the applicant(s) (e.g., in what capacity do you know the applicant, how long you have known him/her/them, etc.). (150 words maximum)
3. Please speak to how the applicant(s) meet the researcher eligibility criteria for the pathway they have selected. Include the work/experience of the applicant(s) in relation to their chosen pathway. (200 words maximum)

Phase 2: Finalist's Presentation

Finalists are selected from the applicant pool and invited to deliver a 30-minute virtual presentation to an online Review Panel. Finalists should expect to present during the week of **June 8 – 10, 2026**. The panel is comprised of a cross-section of cultural experts and 'ōiwi scholars. The Review Panel considers how the applicant furthers the purpose of Māhuhua Ka Lae, has a strong connection to the applicant's chosen research pathway, and considers the following:

1. Potential contribution of the research project and/or the researcher to increasing 'ōiwi-based knowledge and practice in Western and traditional fields of study, research, or practice as an 'ōiwi leader.
2. Demonstrated commitment to 'ōiwi-authored knowledge and research methodology as outlined in the Ho'olaupa'i Hawaiian Research Framework.
3. Feasibility of research project - scope, timeline, milestones, budget, etc.
4. Readiness to commit to and fully engage in the Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Fellowship experience (Fellow attributes, research pathway eligibility, research focus & researcher readiness).

Final Notification

Māhuhua Ka Lae Research Cohort 3 Fellows are selected and notified via email in **late June 2026**.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions or need more information, go to <https://pauahi.org/mkl-fellowship> or e-mail us at scholarships@pauahi.org.