

Position Description

Position:	Apōrei, Tapatahi Principal Advisor, Governance		
Te Puni:	Te Puni Tapatahi Governance		
Reports to:	Kaiārahi, Ngā Ratonga Minita me Tapatahi Manager, Ministerial and Governance Services		
Location:	Te Tari Matua, Te Whanganui a Tara National Office, Wellington		
HR Delegations:	Nil	Financial Delegations:	Nil
Date:	Whiringa-ā-rangi 2025 November 2025		

Mō Te Puni Kōkiri | Te Puni Kōkiri Statement

Te Puni Kōkiri leads policy advice to the Government on Māori development and Iwi and Māori relations with the Crown. To do this effectively we must position ourselves to elevate our monitoring and mentoring responsibilities and emphasise our role in holding other agencies to account for delivery of public services to, for and with Māori.

Our vision is Thriving Whānau – *when whānau are thriving, so do their communities, hapū, iwi and all of Aotearoa*. This vision drives our efforts to build an Aotearoa New Zealand by *drawing strength from our past to build an Aotearoa New Zealand where whānau can all stand, thrive and belong*.

There are two key approaches that frame our work and position us for strategic influence by ensuring that, over time, government effort is aligned to evidence-based approaches that work, for and with Māori:

- Delivery approach – Whānau-centred, locally led, government enabled.
- Policy approach – Te Tautuhi ō Rongo public policy framework.

Our strategic priorities areas:

- Whānau Ora
- Māori economic development and growth
- Monitoring and mentoring
- Māori language and culture
- Iwi and Māori relations with the Crown

If you would like to find out more about Te Puni Kōkiri and our strategy, visit our website tpk.govt.nz.

Mō Te Puni Tapatahi | About Governance

The Governance Puni facilitates high quality and ethical decision making aligned to strategic objectives, and facilitates connections between Ministers, the Ministry, and statutory entities.

It is also responsible for the provision of:

- promotion of and enabling of effective governance;
- delivery of timely and effective responses to information requests that promotes transparency;
- acting as a key conduit between the agency and Ministers;
- overseeing the management, engagement and relationships with statutory entities; and
- overseeing executive-level support including the management and facilitation of cultural support at the strategic level.

Mō te Tima | About the Team

The Ministerial and Governance Services team keeps Ministers and the Ministry joined up by ensuring timely, high quality, and accurate advice of all official documents received from, and sent to the Minister for Māori Development, the Minister for Whānau Ora, Minister for Māori Crown Relations, and other Ministers of the Crown, as appropriate. The team include Portfolio Private Secretaries to Ministers.

The team also provides internal secretariat and governance services to ensure the seamless linking of decision-making processes at Executive Leadership Team, Secretary for Māori Development, and Ministerial levels.

Mō te Tūranga | About the Role

The Principal Advisor, Governance reports to the Manager, Ministerial and Governance Services. This role supports the Manager and the Puni to ensure best practice in organisational governance activity, and the smooth running of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) engagements, and governance committee meetings.

Ngā Haepapa me ngā Kawatau | Accountabilities & Deliverables

Technical Expertise - Governance

- Governance expert and portfolio lead for Te Puni Kōkiri internal governance services and work programmes, ensuring strategic alignment and delivery.
- Provides governance thought leadership to strengthen internal decision-making through effective, efficient, and coordinated governance practice.
- Acts as secretariat to ELT and ELT Committees.
- Drafts, reviews, and improves governance papers and presentations.
- Provides end-to-end governance advice, including establishing new governance committees, drafting and finalising Terms of Reference, managing declarations and conflicts of interest, and conducting governance evaluation reviews.
- Develops templates, training tools, and resources to support high-quality governance papers and presentations.
- Designs, maintains, and continuously improves governance policies, processes, and procedures to ensure they are fit-for-purpose, adaptable, and aligned with best practice.
- Applies analytical expertise and attention to detail to manage governance projects and processes, ensuring prioritisation and timely delivery.
- Engages with internal decision-makers and leaders to ensure governance strategies, methodologies, and tools gain cross-Ministry buy-in and commitment.

Leadership, Relationship and Mentoring

- Builds and maintains trusted relationships with ELT and senior leaders to support governance outcomes.
- Applies business partnering and relationship management with assigned Puni to support the delivery of governance outcomes.
- Provides regular reporting on the progress and delivery of organisational governance work programmes and activities.
- Collaborates with other Principal Advisors in the team as a leadership cohort to support the Manager, Ministerial and Governance Services, and the Deputy Secretary, Governance.
- Coaches and mentors Senior Advisers and Advisers in the team and delivers training across Te Puni Kōkiri to build capability in governance best practice.
- Undertakes other tasks as instructed by the Manager, Ministerial and Governance Services.

Ngā Pūkenga me ngā Wheako | Skills & Experience

- Minimum 5 years of governance advisory experience at a Principal Adviser level, including as secretariat to governance boards and senior leadership teams in the public sector.
- Proven experience in the areas outlined in the Accountabilities and Responsibilities of this role.
- Relevant tertiary qualifications in disciplines such as law, governance, or business.
- Excellent understanding of the machinery of government, public sector obligations, conflict of interest management, and governance frameworks, including decision-making protocols, delegations, and accountability structures.
- Superior communication and writing skills, including the ability to draft, quality-assure, and coach others to produce high-quality governance papers and presentations for Ministerial, executive, and senior-level audiences.
- Flexible, resilient, willing to work on a broad range of matters and support the team as surge capacity, as required.
- Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi:
 - Broad understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi, recognising its importance from both Māori and Crown perspectives.
 - Comfortable in a te ao Māori environment and in situations where tikanga is observed.



- A level of competency in te reo Māori, or a willingness to learn.