

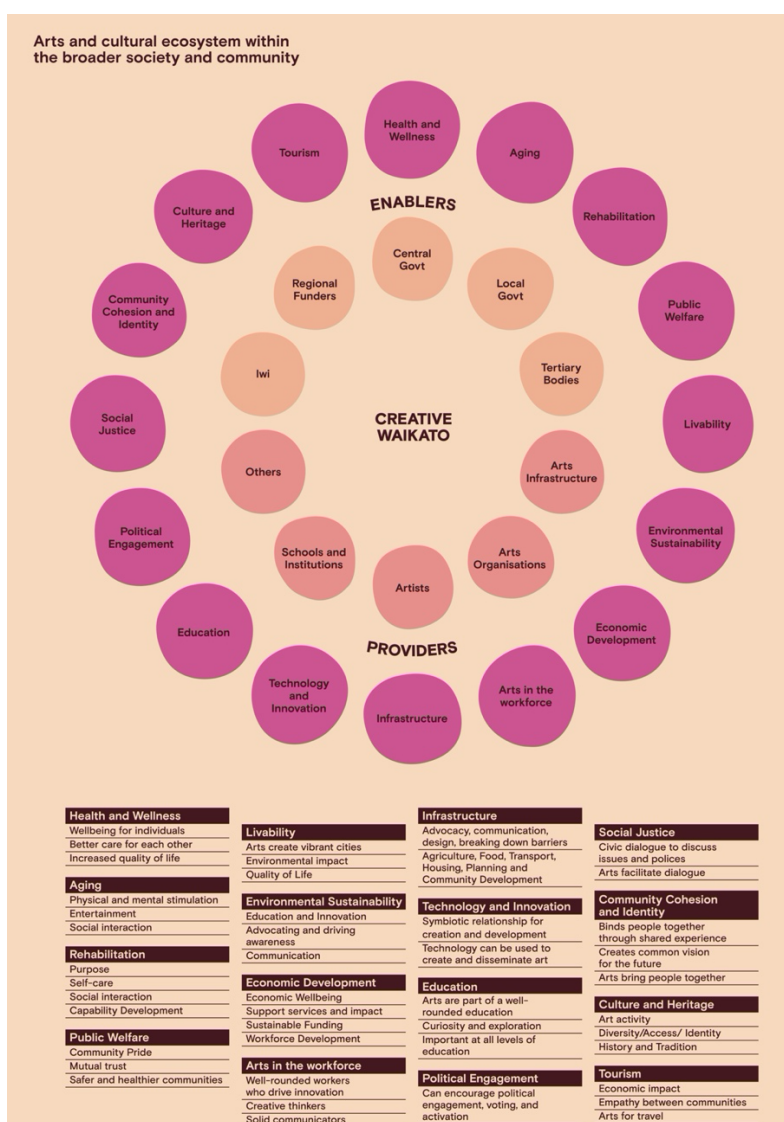
Creative Sector Pathways

Creative sector careers are variable and can take many forms. They extend across the cultural ecosystem and will work from flax-roots level community practice through to professional/commercial creative outputs and everything in between. Many of our thriving local practitioners transcend these boundaries regularly throughout their work.

From a national sector perspective, the vision for creative careers is one that takes multiple pathways and is framed around a broad recognition of the value of arts, creative and cultural practice brings to the social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing of our societies. According to the 2022 Creative New Zealand [National Remuneration Policy](#), the fundamental understanding is that “All creative work is, by default, paid work” and it should be remunerated fairly. This should be true for work focussed around social cohesion, participatory creative process, and community activation, as well as commercial creative endeavours.

Looking at the core employment career pathway for practitioners in the wider Waikato Region, is an understanding that Artists and arts practitioners should be well positioned to adopt a portfolio approach to achieving a sustainable career. *“A portfolio career in the arts sector is one in which artists and arts practitioners are unlikely to have a single permanent job, and may be balancing their creative practice with related creative work such as teaching and/or non-creative work”¹.*

It is important to take a broad view of the roles that people with arts training can take in our media/story/content driven culture, and to look more broadly at the ways in which creative practice can exist within many industries in the region.



¹ Creative New Zealand, Remuneration Policy for Artists and Arts Practitioners, March 2022

Other considerations for broader pathways into creative careers:

Growth opportunities in the Waikato

- Waikato Regional Theatre
 - New opportunities for broader audience engagement for emerging performance careers
 - New opportunities for technical staff (lighting/sound/AV) as well as training opportunities (internship/apprentice)
 - Potential to expand into a professional performing arts company based in Hamilton – further pathways from Wintec Performing Arts degree.
 - Further connection into programmes like [ELEVATE Creative Careers](#) – run by Creative Waikato for pathways into classes, national funding opportunities, and cross-sector collaborations
- New Media/Tech collaborations
 - Pathways for artistic careers in web/tech developments – designers, story, performers, composers, content creators
 - Immersive art experiences (see [MEOW WOLF](#) in Santa Fe as an example). Initial pilot explorations have been emerging in Hamilton (The Mesoverse) with scope for these to expand as tourist attraction, career pathway, and contribution to placemaking.
 - Potential for establishment as [UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts for](#) Hamilton
- Wellbeing/Wellness/Personal Development for Employers
 - Growing research around the needs for holistic support for employees in all sectors – creative opportunities are a growth area for this. Pathways for creative roles in “[art for wellbeing](#)” opportunities in corporate spaces
 - Contribution to [positive impact on mental health](#)
 - Opportunities for professional development through performing arts training for professionals who need to give public presentations (micro-credentials)

Placemaking

A new focus for local government and modern design principles is to have more people-centric space – which is aligned to a concept called ‘placemaking’. Placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share. Humans are storytellers. We share through story. We understand through story. We inspire and make change through story. Urban spaces have the potential to be the canvas for those stories – through painting and murals, to sculpture and light, to music and dance and words and more. Our cities are a space for us to share local stories and to inspire conversations, and reflections. Also, by creating beautiful, vibrant, colourful spaces, we can allow space for moments of awe – which is vital for our mental health and wellbeing.

Arts-informed placemaking can do powerful things to break down industrial silos, and demonstrate the broad value of moving beyond the narrow focus of any single profession, discipline, or agenda. It is about community connection, and grassroots involvement, and social procurement that engages with the local creative community, the results can be powerful and transformative. If we can support systems where collaborative processes can acknowledge the local expertise and engage with communities we can enhance the cultural literacy and creative activity of all of Aotearoa and support sustainable artistic careers alongside powerful and measurable wellbeing impact for broader societal benefit.

Community Activation

There is a growing body of national and international research which supports the role of meaningful access to creative expression as a tool for recovery, rehabilitation, addressing mental health, fostering creative thinking and innovation, encouraging social connection, building communities, and understanding the self. The arts are increasingly being used as a response to societal concerns, to bring about greater cohesion, equity, and sense of

community. It is vital to explore and understand the true impact of the work discussed above as an upstream tool for strengthening communities, empowering identity, and shaping a sense of space and place - all of which are important for local government consideration and support.

To have the freedom to be part of creative activity is a human right: access for everyone to take part in a cultural life. By proactively valuing, and supporting the arts, culture and creative sector, we can create sustainable pathways for creative sector careers, and we can add value and enhance the well-being of New Zealanders. It is therefore important to acknowledge the importance of access to cultural, artistic and creative expression as a key component of addressing social cohesion and wellbeing. This should be a focus area for the work of the RSLG – particularly as it aligns to Healthy Communities.

Community activation takes many forms, but one simple pathway is in having active artists-in-residence in communities. This brings creative practice into visible spaces, and provides frameworks to support those approaches, and to understand how they can be a vital part of the recovery and revitalisation of small communities.

EXAMPLES:

- [Cultural Activator](#) – In South Waikato, there is a pilot programme of a ‘cultural activator’ role with a professional artist working in community to activate and support the creative life of the community. This is being run with the support of Creative Waikato and the Ministry of Culture and Heritage. Opportunities like this have a range of social impacts and valuable contributions to measures for community developments like those within the Living Standards Framework, the UN SDGs and the UCLG Culture 21.
- [City of Culture](#) – is a designation given to a city in the United Kingdom for a period of one calendar year, during which the successful bidder hosts cultural festivities through culture-led regeneration for the year. The UK-wide programme is to "build on the success of Liverpool's year as [European Capital of Culture](#) 2008, which had significant social and economic benefits for the area". One recent example was the [City of Hull](#) 2017 - [a report by University of Hull in March 2018](#) found Hull's status as the UK City of Culture attracted more than five million people, £220 million of investment and 800 new jobs. This is an exciting model to explore.
- Universal Basic Income models for supporting arts in communities as a core form of social investment and community impact. Reframing the role of the artist as a social and community service. This is [emerging in Ireland](#) and [San Francisco](#).
- [Other international examples](#)

“Creativity and culture creates jobs, drives economic recovery and enhances social wellbeing”

- Associate Minister for Arts Culture and Heritage Grant Robertson

As we move forward the an emerging key economic focus is in the area of experience. We are moving into an experience economy. A world of spaces and moments that being peoples stories, and help them to connect with the places where they work and play.

There are of course the challenges meeting humanities basic needs (food, shelter...), but as we move beyond that, there is a trend towards looking for meaningful experiences that transcend materialism. We can blur the lines between art and amusement, between the high and low - shifting boundaries in really exciting and complicated ways. This has huge potential for the Waikato Region as a key pathway and emerging industry that could reshape how we understand what we do.

RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT MAY FORM PART OF A CREATIVE CAREER PORTFOLIO IN THE WAIKATO

Art directors
Craft artists
Fine artists
Multimedia artists
Muralists
Sculptors
Commercial designers
Industrial designers
Fashion designers
Graphic designers
Interior designers
Set designers
Exhibition designers
Framer
Preparator
Technician
Editor
Photographer
Videographer
Writer
Journalist
Composer
Musician
Teacher
Actor
Dancer
Director
Choreographer
Animator
Teacher
Music/Choir director
Sound designer
Content creator
Social marketer
Architectural Design
Wellbeing coach
Voice coach
Art therapist
Private instructor
Lecturer
App designer
Illustrator
Kapa haka coach
Weaver
Carver
Tattoo artist
Curator
And more...

Plus roles in public sector, local government, policy, mental health, physical health, etc.

Creative Waikato can give further advice on other opportunities to embed art-based approaches into the range of sectors as covered in the ecosystem map and the [Waikato Arts Navigator](#).

We know that arts, culture and creativity are powerful levers for positive social change. They show us that we make the world rather than simply inherit it. This is why the vision is for arts, culture and creativity to be embedded more broadly in future opportunities throughout the Waikato ecosystem. There is tremendous talent and value here and there is so much potential to have positive collective impact in this space.