

## Submission to Manatū Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage Long Term Insights Briefing

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this process and to connect into national discussions for systemic change from a regional perspective.

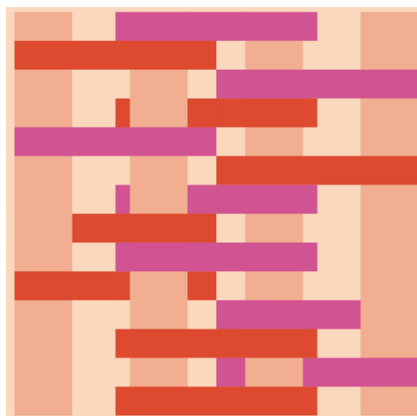
There has been a continued shift in perception (from the regional perspective) around engagement with MCH that has been trending in a positive direction since this recent focus shift, funding increase, and change in scope and activity. We certainly appreciate the connection that seems more relevant now, and processes like this provide a next step for sector consultation, but there is more to be done – particularly through engagement with regional communities, under connected communities as well as partnership within Te Ao Māori.

It seems like as we collectively re-imagine and re-design the systemic structures that feed into the arts, culture and creative ecosystem, it is vital to have a deep and crystal clear understanding of this intricate, multifaceted ecosystem and how it flows from flax-roots activity through to professional output.

It would be also useful to re-examine the role each Ministry and Crown agency plays in serving particular parts of the ecosystem, with the clarity of vision that ensures that the whole ecosystem is served with a view for access and equity. If we can operate from a starting point of arts, culture and creativity as a public good that directly serves the future wellbeing of people in New Zealand, we can understand the different components that enable that.

### WELLBEING OF COMMUNITIES

Creativity is essential to a thriving humanity. It is how we understand who we are and how we connect to one another. It is interwoven through all facets of our wellbeing. To use a creative metaphor, we can understand wellbeing as an intricately woven cloth. This cloth is our collective experience. In it, we can see the horizontal threads as arts and culture, and the vertical threads as everything else. When both work together, with arts and culture touching each strand of all other aspects of society, the interlocking strands become beautiful, strong and inspiring.



This fabric represents our capacity to live healthy and fulfilling lives, by allowing us to identify who we are, how we engage with each other, and how we think and feel. This is our wellbeing.

Wellbeing looks different within many different cultures, and needs to be addressed as such. It is a living and holistic thing that is intrinsically connected with who we are. This is connected to the many diverse communities in this region. Because we are based in Aotearoa, at the core of this work we must acknowledge the wellbeing of tangata whenua, and understand wellbeing from a Te Ao Māori perspective as integral to wellbeing in Aotearoa.

If a vision for the future of this sector, and the impacts that it can have on the people of Aotearoa, works from a wellbeing framework, there is potential for us to ask bold questions, and reimagine what the ecosystem would be like if sustainability was assumed. How can we move from a 'scarcity' mindset, to an abundance mindset that enables the ecosystem to be resilient and purpose and should interconnect with wider activities to support and generate activity, as well as being part of driving diverse and transformative outcomes for all people.

There are important roles for different ministries to play in terms of various moving parts of the broader creative ecosystem (MSD for career pathways, MBIE for commercial projects, MoE for creative education and cultural literacy, MoH for creative health interventions) but it is vital that MCH has the broader strategic vision for the sector, can articulate that with other partners, but also holds people and communities at the forefront of the mahi that it is responsible for enabling.

## **THE CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM**

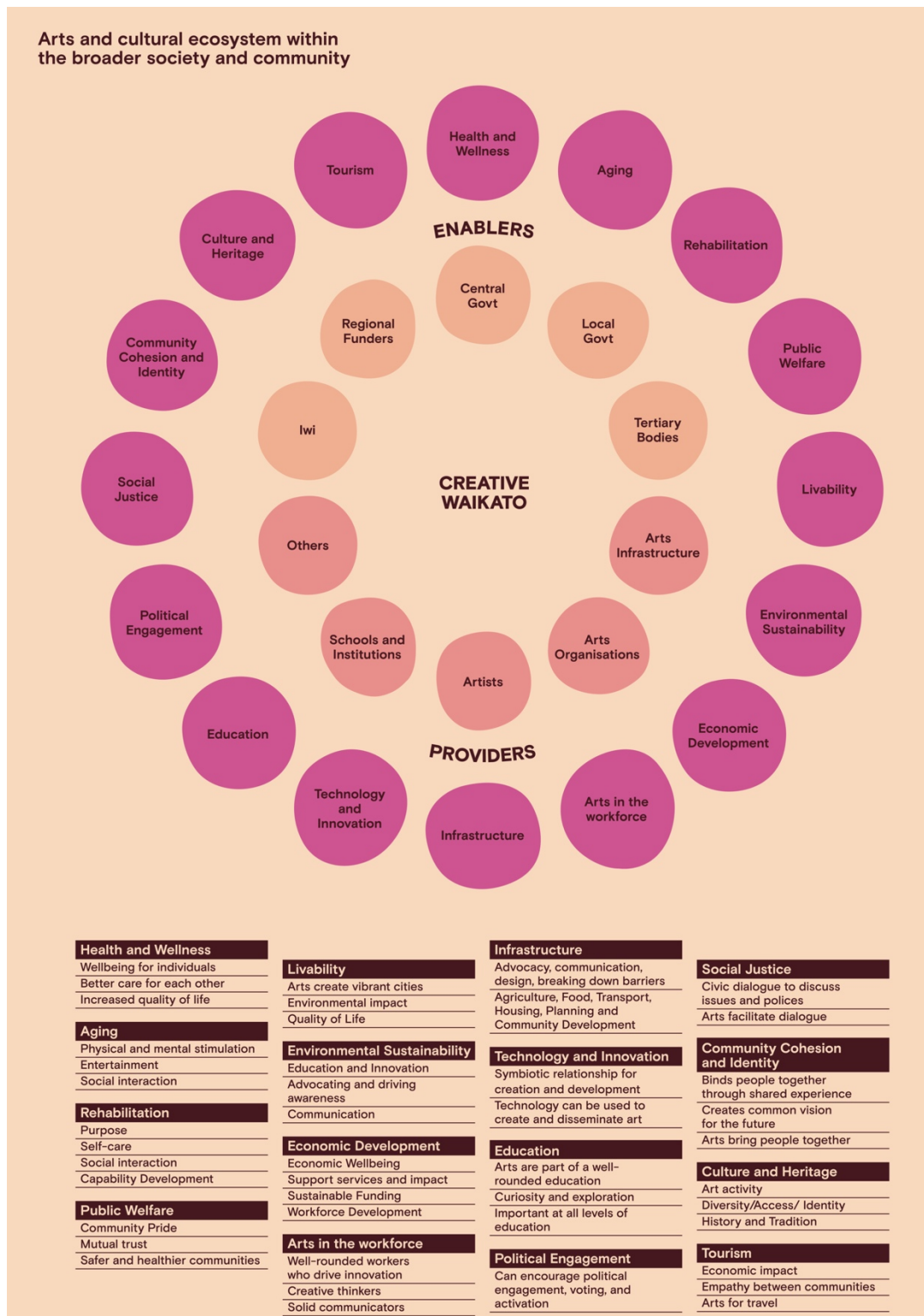
This is a vital part of a long term strategy, a pathway for future development, and to have a clarity of perception and insights around the interconnected nature of the sector and how it functions and could flourish. There are many intersecting elements, the practitioners move between areas of work, outcome and focus. Each component has an important part to play and the boundaries between and within a fluid and adaptable. In that way the ecosystem is best understood as a natural system the functions in an interconnected, and adaptable way.

For Creative Waikato we operate with the understanding and vision that the arts can be, and should be, embedded in all facets of our community. They feed into a broader understanding of the ecosystem of our community and place. When we collectively use arts- based approaches we move forward in an inclusive and engaging way.

It is important for local government, industry and sector leaders to see artists as a more embedded component within the rest of society. This encourages a collaborative space where the value of artists in society can be better recognised and utilised. As part of this, it would include a diverse but interconnected ecosystem of arts infrastructure (both hard and soft) that would provide clear pathways for artists and community members at any stage of the journey.

It is important to examine the whole system and look at the potential levers of change. To understand the system at a macro level, but enable activation at a local community level. Empower activity, provide access, and encourage creativity.

This is one way of visualising a system and the different places the arts, culture and creative sector can intersect throughout society.



This is also a vision for a collaborative connection between enablers that flows through to providers for collective action. Truly looking at mechanisms for partnership, collaboration, and co-investment to drive towards a theory of change and people-centric impact. Impact that is fundamentally connected to wellbeing.

## STRATEGIC VISION

We acknowledge the calls from the sector for a national strategy for the arts, culture and creative sector. This strategy should be something developed with the sector, and something the sector can feel they are a part of driving. An active strategy. Not just a document that is crafted and then eventually gets reviewed. This strategic vision should empower change, should address the conditions that will enable that change, and should help to frame priorities for different parties.

This should look at the way the sector is funded and valued. It should have a vision for public good, access, participation and community wellbeing. It should **acknowledge the role that creative practice and arts and cultural activity can have, and should have, in the lives of all New Zealanders.**

This strategy should include **visionary impact within the education system.** Acknowledging how vital creativity and curiosity will be for future generations. Acknowledging the research informed role that creative practice will play in the resilience and wellbeing of people. This would also become a vital driver of change towards a cultural shift in understanding and value for the sector, general individual and collective wellbeing, as well as the overall sustainability of the sector.

This strategy would provide **transparent communication around government strategies, priorities and outcomes**, and how the different ministries will contribute to that. It should include advisory that provides a sector insight for the way in which the creative sector can support the wider ecosystem as demonstrated in the diagram above.

For Creative Waikato, we see the value of community/sector-led strategic development that strives for collaborative collective action. We know **It is important to have a vision.** It is a way that we can collectively move forward and make a positive impact on our world. We can make the world a more interesting place. We can reimagine the future. We need to do this mahi to set things in motion that will create a positive, inclusive, open, creative and flourishing world for our children and their children.

A national strategy with long-term vision must be designed to be utilised, implemented and activated by all people who choose to identify as being part of the arts ecosystem. This means artists, arts organisations, advocates, audiences, and communities - alongside enablers like ministries, councils, government, crown agencies, funders and other interested parties who want to celebrate the role of arts, culture and creativity.

Ultimately this is about having a shared language, a way to understand and communicate the value of what we do, and to find ways to work with one another to achieve greater outcomes.

There are a range of ways this can be done, but having a clarity of communication, and thinking about how this vision can inspired change is vital.

CREATIVE WELLBEING	CREATIVE PROSPERITY	CREATIVE EXPERIENCES	CREATIVE EDUCATION	CREATIVE INNOVATION
Mental, physical & spiritual wellbeing	Creative economies	People experience local, national, international arts	Participatory art projects	Business partnerships
Positive collective & individual identities	Attract & retain residents	Community & cultural expression	Upskilling creative professionals	Informing local government decision making
Create, grow & strengthen communities	Tourism opportunities	Recreation & interaction	Community art classes & projects	Local problem solving
Inspired responses to challenges such as Covid-19	Positive national perceptions	Community engagement & connection	Youth development	Distinct local expression
Strengthened connection to place	Increased investment from regional & national funders	Local pride	Audience development	Creative export opportunities

These things are top of mind for our communities, looking at how we can collectively thrive with diverse and transformative creative activity.

## INSIGHTS AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS

As part of our ongoing strategic visioning, advocacy, and sector engagement, we have gathered a range of insights that should be considered when working through this visioning exercise. This is not a complete list, but it is indicative of regular consideration:

- Equity of access (both in terms of physical communities – regional/rural/metropolitan; and in terms of cultural communities)
- Dynamic and interwoven understanding of the arts, culture and creative ecosystem and how it flourishes
- Te Ao Māori as a fundamental pou for vision, activation and delivery
- Diversity is a core part of community wellbeing and enabling activity
- Connected strategic vision that intersects between national vision, regional work, and local activation
- Strengths-based activation and support
- Impact-driven investment
- Competitive funding models are rethought with sustained longer-term investment
- Funding is seen as investment in people-centric outcomes rather than project-centric outputs.
- Models are redesigned to give mandate to regional bodies to be able to support local needs, socially focused activation, kaupapa-driven activity and community-led decision making
- This would be paired with sustained investment in regional arts organisations as core capability builders and activators with robust community connections (this can be seen as comparative to the sport sector – SPORT NZ to Regional Sports Trusts).
- Structures are designed to encourage regular community-led innovation (more space and capacity to deliver)
- Investment is sustainable and works from wellbeing-centric measures

- Collective advocacy, research, education and communication contribute to a clarity of understanding and value of arts, culture and creativity in Aotearoa.

### Partnership with Regional Insights

Regional Arts Organisations, through the emergent RANA Network, provide a useful resource and pathway for future possibilities.

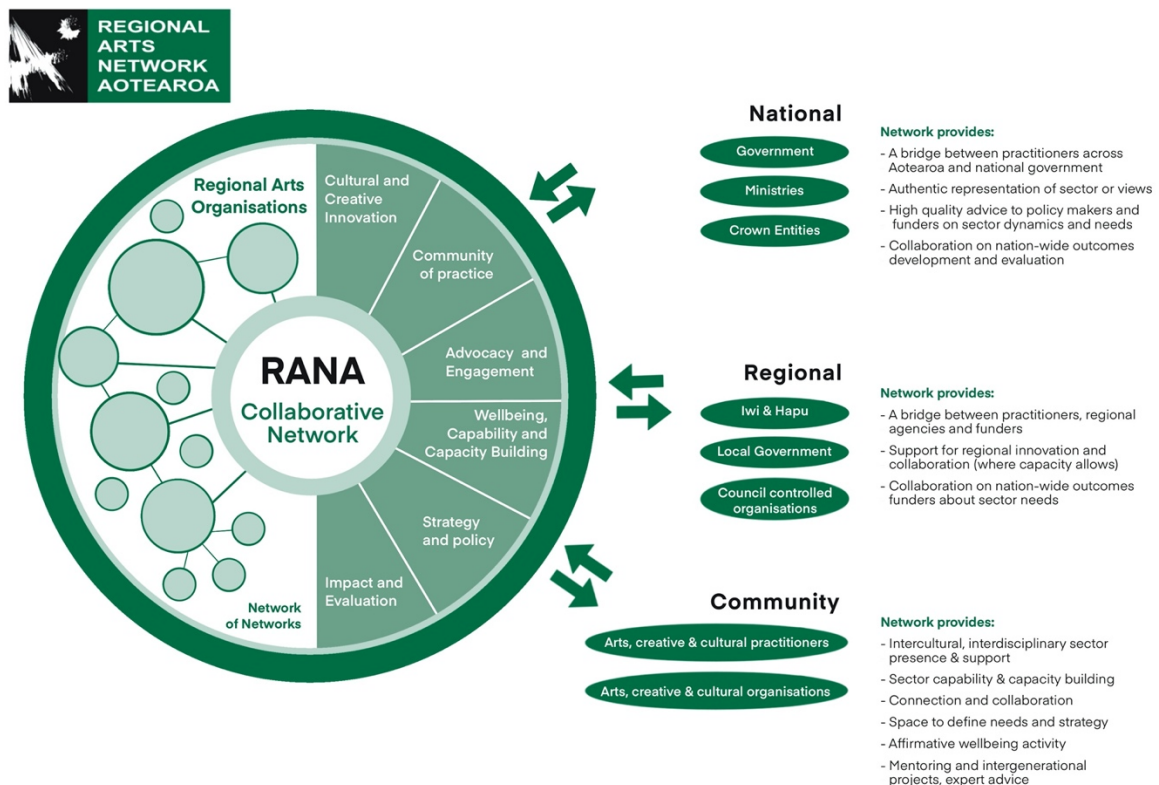
Within this structure there is an opportunity for collaboration with broader insights across the ecosystem, as well as have collaborative approaches to strategy, capability building, advocacy and the distribution of funding.

RAOs provide an opportunity to deliver:

- Arts sector support
- Development and leadership
- Research and insights
- Distribution of funding to communities
- Broader wellbeing benefits through empowering local practitioners.

There is a precedent established by Regional Sports Trusts, and as the wellbeing outcomes are comparable, it would seem pertinent to envisage an equitable structure and funding model to provide additional access and activation throughout all communities.

RANA has developed an aspirational model to provide an overview of how this structure could work and can be a key partner to deliver the outcomes the broader community needs from the arts and culture sector.



## Specific feedback on briefing content

At the core to any vision for the future of arts, culture and creativity in this country should be the way that we can ensure all people have access to creative and cultural practice in their lives. We should be able to encourage all people to understand the benefits that creative practice has in our lives and how we can understand one another and strengthen our connections. As such, accessibility to arts, culture and creativity for all is paramount: it must be a core focus area that addresses all communities within Aotearoa. We need to specifically enable consistent and sustained equity of access and inclusion in telling the stories of our people.

***What do you think about the infrastructure components we have listed? Are any components missing? Should any be removed?***

The components identify value, risks, opportunities and challenges into the future. However, it is important that these components are not viewed in isolation. Each component is interconnected and interwoven as part of a wider ecosystem.

It is our view that there are significant drivers of change that affect many components. It is these drivers which will influence all components, These are not time-bound, but will influence cultural sector infrastructure.

Education, access, equity and wellbeing are vital. This should be paired with an authentic connection to Te Ao Māori through all components.

As a core vision for the future should be more meaningful cross-Ministry partnerships that could embed arts, culture and creativity throughout all delivery. This should be paired with an understanding of the role each ministry could play within the broader understanding of the ecosystem. This should include areas like education, health and justice investing in embedding arts within each sector - or coordinating government policy and investment towards both community outcomes and sustainable artistic practice.

**Which components do you consider to be most fundamental in fostering a sustainable and impactful cultural sector in the next 10-20 years?**

One of the core drivers of change will be how arts, culture and creativity are activated and enabled in all communities in Aotearoa. This activation should be paired with sustained investment enable positive change through regional infrastructure that understands and connects the sector from flax roots community initiatives to professional offerings. Fundamentally this is the aspirational vision as outline by the RANA network with an understanding of the broader role of Regional Arts Organisations in our communities.

Other significant drivers of change

Climate change - Everyone is responsible for creating a more environmentally sustainable world, and the arts and cultural sector is no exception. Although climate change is a significant driver, the arts play an important role in how society perceives its



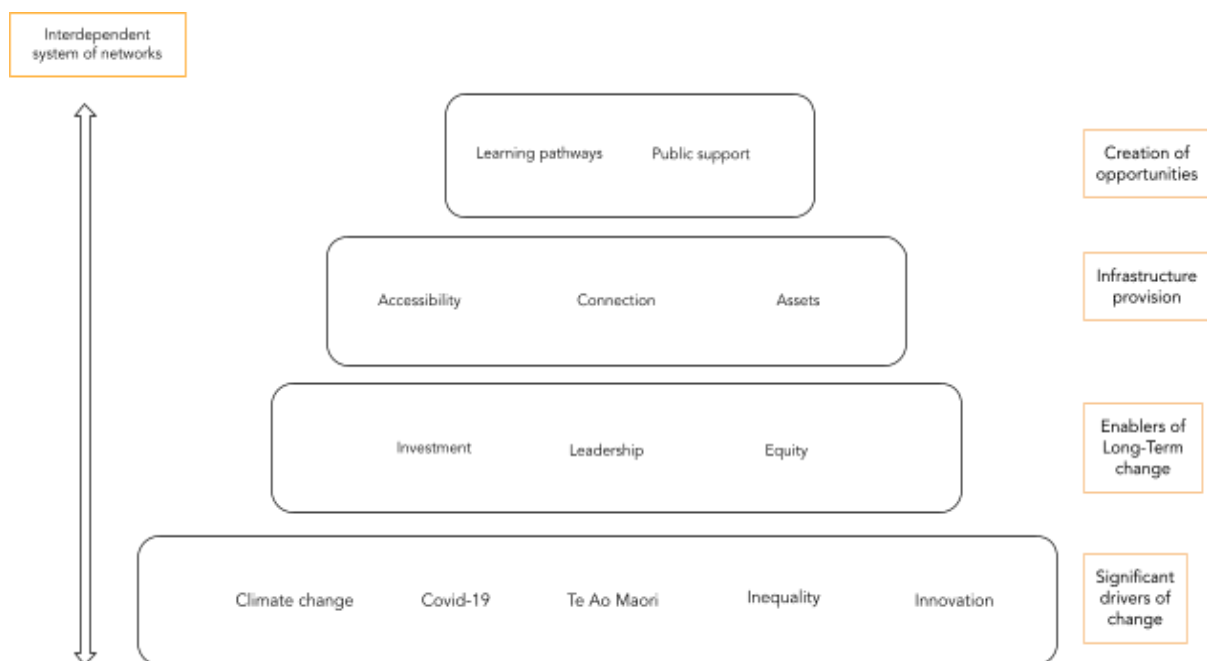
importance. This story can be told through arts, and arts with a clear impact vision become a vital part of how we tell stories and share ideas to inspire change.

Covid-19 - The only thing certain about Covid-19 is it's uncertainty. The arts and culture sector must be nimble, adaptable and learn how to operate without certainty about what is going to happen in the future. We are collectively emerging from a period of trauma and our access to arts, culture and creativity will be fundamental to how we can process this and provide positive change for the future.

Te Ao Maori - A Te Ao Maori view is fundamental in understanding how we view the world and our place in it. In traditional Maori knowledge, everything in the world is related, that there is something beyond the world of everyday experience or what is known by some as 'Te Kore' 'unlimited potential for being'.

Inequality - Inequality is not an outcome of growth, but plays a role in determining the pattern of growth and poverty reduction. New Zealand's economic growth and economic development does not have to be at the expense of increasing inequality. Inequality is pervasive and spans generations. Unless this driver is addressed, we will continue to live in an Aotearoa where separation exists. This transcends across sectors, across wellbeing measures, across cultures. It is present in remuneration, in access, in housing, in opportunity and beyond.

**Please provide any additional feedback or ideas you have about the components of cultural sector infrastructure or the examples in the supporting material.**



We support the submission from Te Rōpū Mana Toi as well as any submissions from members of the RANA Network. These are communities of practice from within and across the ecosystem – arts advocates and strategic thinkers who are proactively driving change from within the sector. We work with communities, across enablers and are



committed to supporting the development of the sector, and articulating the value of the sector through research and proactive activity.

With these groups we know that there is a need for continued change to the systems that currently exist for support, funding and capability building in the arts, culture and creative sector. We need to keep the cultural ecosystem at top of mind and have a holistic vision for how this interacts with our broader society rather than just within the existing frameworks of the sector.

Human experience is nuanced, diverse, and interconnected, and our systems should draw from indigenous understanding of how arts, culture and creativity are embedded across our lived experiences. We want to work towards the drivers of change that enable arts, culture and creativity as being recognised as public good. This occurs through education and cultural literacy, through meaningful arts experience, and through a commitment to lived experiences of sustainable wellbeing.

Future thinking is an opportunity to not assume that any component of the system needs to remain. It can adapt. It can work towards a clearly articulated vision. It should work from the basis of people. It should connect communities. It should drive change towards the benefits of all people. This will necessitate change. It requires refocusing and asking new questions. It requires work and a commitment to recognising different frames of knowledge and embracing hauora as a core value measure that exists beyond economic frameworks.

### **Offer**

Creative Waikato is available to support in any consultation and development of the response to this future thinking work. We also welcome future consideration around activations at regional levels.

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