

Amplify- A Short Summary of Creative Waikato's Submission

Amplify is a national strategy that makes sure arts, culture and creativity are actively considered and supported. Creative Waikato has prepared a submission to this strategy. Here is a summary of the main points of our submission.
(You can feel free to use any of these ideas in your submission too :)

- Creative Waikato recognises the vision to **'Amplify our arts and culture to make New Zealand a global creative powerhouse'**, but also acknowledge that 'amplification' requires energy, support, activation and infrastructure to reach people.
- Creative Waikato acknowledges the inclusion of the **2030 targets** and suggest prioritising them in this order:
 - A. More New Zealanders are actively engaging with New Zealand arts, culture and heritage.
 - B. The median income for creative professionals more closely matches the median income for New Zealanders earning a wage or salary
 - C. New Zealand ranks among the top 25 nations in the world for culture and heritage soft power resulting in high-value tourism exports
 - D. The GDP contribution of the arts and creative sector increases to at least \$20billion, with a focus on exports.
- There is a lot of evidence that says that supporting active engagement in arts, culture and creativity is a driver of positive change.
- Creative Waikato supports the acknowledgement of the importance of te ao Māori, as well as connections to relationships with Pacific cultural practice.
- Creative Waikato supports a whole-of-government approach in order to activate this strategy. Arts and Culture can connect to:
 - Other ministries, (Ministry of Education, Trade, Business, Tourism, Health etc)
 - Other agencies (CNZ, NZ Film Commission, NZonAir, Te Mangai Paho, Lotteries Commission etc)
 - Other organisations (Toi Mai, Tertiary and Vocational Education providers, Regional Arts Organisations etc)

Guiding Principles

Creative Waikato supports the guiding principles, but proposes are reordering of these:

1. Government supports and recognises the value to people's lives of lifelong engagement with arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori.
2. Government acknowledges Māori arts, culture and heritage as taonga and important to New Zealand's culture and identity, and partners with Māori to enable their cultural aspirations.
3. Government values all creative work, people, and audiences, and takes the unique attributes and benefits of the creative and cultural sectors into account during policy development and investment.

4. Government provides support for creative and cultural practitioners at all stages of their development, and clear pathways into work that uses their skills.
 5. Government works to connect New Zealand creatives to local and global audiences.
- Creative Waikato acknowledges the many positive impacts that can emerge from *‘proactive lifelong engagement with creative practice as a contributor to a range of skill-based and health-based outcomes.*

Three key pillars

1. Strategic Pillar: Investing for Maximum Impact

- Community activated organisations and individuals of the creative sector make significant impact. Creative and creative organisations offer vital opportunities in all regions for social impact, education, skill development, connection, strengthening local identity, and community cohesion. These things have positive social benefits and require investment and support.

2. Strategic Pillar: Nurturing Talent

- Creative Waikato agree that Creative skills are “an asset to both New Zealanders working in the creative and cultural sectors, and those working in the wider workforce. Access to creativity and a sense of cultural identity can also improve wider outcomes, in areas such as education (in both creative and non-creative subjects), health, and social cohesion.”
- We support the importance of creativity in core school curriculum at all levels of education.
- There is a growing call from a broad range of sectors (construction, manufacturing, management, law, health, tech) for people who have the skills of creativity, communication and storytelling. Arts-based education is an essential pathway for these things.
- We also fully support the importance of supporting the development of, and pathways for, creative practitioners who will need to navigate portfolio careers. This requires ongoing accessible skills development

3. Strategic Pillar: Reducing Barriers to Growth

- We support the concept of examining the levers for policy or system change within government regulation as a potential contributor to growth.
- There is value in looking at support for creatives and their IP and how that can be better managed and understood.
- It is important to explore the impact of building density on noise levels in city environments, in order to keep live performance thriving and contributing to the character of our cities.
- It is important to have government legislation up to date with shifts in systems and technologies.

General Comments

- Arts and culture are powerful tools for social cohesion (bringing people together and building connection to people and place)
- Arts and culture are powerful tools for supporting communities facing challenges
- Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Maaori can make significant contributions to thriving communities if they are supported. The community already makes a significant contribution to these areas through investment, in-kind support, volunteer time, and creative skill. It is essential that these people continue to be supported to enable needed social outcomes.
- The creative sector is one of the fastest growing sectors for economic development in Aotearoa. There is great potential for strengthened local activity and international export.
- Community arts and cultural activity creates essential learning and development pathways for creative professionals.
- Artistic activity is a contributor to vibrant and thriving places, and the wellbeing of communities, both now and in the future. But it needs to remain accessible. It would be good to see (in this strategy) more specific acknowledgement of actions around accessibility, support for diverse communities, and how to activate participation in communities.
- Engagement in creative activity in and around the workplace makes measurable contributions to productivity, innovation, and mental health.
- Impact is not only measured in terms of financial return and asset utilisation, but also wellbeing, and the ways in which these experiences contribute to things like community cohesion, connection to place and land and self.
- The impacts of the creative community on social and cultural wellbeing are also significant. In-depth [Waikato-focussed research from 2022](#)¹ showed that regular access and perceived access to arts, culture and creativity is a significant driver of individual wellbeing. This can contribute to better mental health outcomes, but also shows measurable connection to social cohesion, community connection, civic pride, and sense of identity.

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https://creativewaikato.co.nz/site/uploads/HS_Creative-Waikato_Wellbeing-and-Arts-Culture-and-Creativity-in-the-Waikato_FINAL.pdf

Creative Waikato - Organisational response

Submitted in response to:

Amplify: A Creative and Cultural Strategy for New Zealand
(Draft) 2024–2030

Thank you Minister Goldsmith and the Manatū Taonga team for encouraging and enabling the arts, culture and creative sector to respond to your “national strategy that outlines how the government will prioritise support for our creative and cultural sectors to 2030.”

This submission is made by Creative Waikato in response to the call for engagement published on 31st October 2024.

1. Overall themes

- Creative Waikato would firstly like to acknowledge the time and work that has gone into creating this draft strategy and providing a framework for engaging with the sector.
- Creative Waikato supports the outline from the Minister to “see more New Zealanders actively engaging with our arts, culture and heritage, and more Kiwis making a good living in the sector”.
- We also recognise the acknowledgement that the sector and its contributors and enablers are multifaceted, and appreciate the willingness in the opening framing for this work to be “enabling”, to “foster collaboration and complement actions in creative and cultural organisations’ existing strategies” and also to “spark a conversation” to “agree on a direction”.
- Creative Waikato supports the acknowledgement of the importance of te ao Māori, as well as connections to relationships with Pacific cultural practice.
- It is great to see the acknowledgment of previous work and sector engagement informing this strategy to build upon the already significant contributions from the sector to these consultations. This should be an iterative, as well as vision-led, process.
- We recognise the vision to “Amplify our arts and culture to make New Zealand a global creative powerhouse” but acknowledge that amplification (as a creative metaphor) ultimately requires energy, support, activation and infrastructure to reach people.
- We also appreciate being invited to contribute to discussions on the strategy from a regional and community perspective. This written submission supports ideas expressed in those discussions.

2. Creative Waikato (in context)

- Creative Waikato is a strategic regional arts organisation serving the wider Waikato Region. This region covers the area from Waikato District to Ruapehu District, and from Ōtorohanga District to the Thames-Coromandel District. Our main centre of operation is in Hamilton City. We provide strategic advice, capability building, advocacy and research to support the arts, culture and creative ecosystem.
- We contribute to the Regional Arts Network Aotearoa (RANA), as well as work in collaboration with other regional partners in Sport (Sport Waikato), Social Services (Community Waikato), Philanthropy (Trust Waikato and the wider Waikato Funders Network), and other regional bodies for Economic Development, Social Impact, Tourism, Education and Health.
- We work with practitioners and community organisations across all artforms, mediums and forms of expression. This work expands from grassroots community initiatives through to professional creative practice.
- We bring this range of insights and strategic understanding to our response submitted here.

3. 2030 Targets

- We acknowledge the inclusion of these targets and understand their inclusion. It seems that these targets could be more specifically activated if there was a logic map applied. We suggest prioritising the order of these targets as they seem to be interconnected. Our suggestion:
 - a. More New Zealanders are actively engaging with New Zealand arts, culture and heritage.
 - *(Having more local people engaging with arts, culture and heritage can support community connection, education, social cohesion, and wellbeing - this becomes a driver for other outcomes)*
 - *Regionalised support mechanisms can help to amplify the arts, culture and creativity that exist in our communities.*
 - *Question: What constitutes more? Is this in both passive and active participation? How can access be supported in this space?*
 - b. The median income for creative professionals more closely matches the median income for New Zealanders earning a wage or salary.
 - *(If more people are engaging with local activity that supports stronger pathways to support increasing income, alongside other enabling forces that are considered in the strategy)*
 - c. New Zealand ranks among the top 25 nations in the world for culture and heritage soft power resulting in high-value cultural tourism and exports.
 - *(Culture and heritage soft power-as defined by the Global Soft Power Index- is based upon influential arts and entertainment, and rich heritage, but also considers culinary outputs, lifestyle factors, and sporting opportunities - which requires additional*

collaborative approaches alongside creative industries, arts and cultural activities, and heritage. It would be good to understand the possible scale of influence in this change, and also how the 'lifestyle' component is measured in connection with accessible creative activities in local communities)

- d. The GDP contribution of the arts and creative sector increases to at least \$20 billion, with a focus on exports.
 - *(This can work concurrently with those stronger pathways, richer engagement, and depth of understanding. It is also important to acknowledge the highly valuable additional impacts from the arts, culture and creative sector beyond economic measures)*

- Considering the broader cultural and social context of Aotearoa at present, with a government focus on addressing social impact, community connection, productivity and innovation, and educational outcomes, there is a strong evidence base to support a prioritisation of increasing active engagement in arts, culture and creativity as a driver of positive change.

4. Guiding Principles

- We support the concepts of the principles as outlined in the strategy, and again would suggest a re-prioritising of these to support greater implementation and flow of outcomes.
- We propose this order:
 1. Government supports and recognises the value to people's lives of lifelong engagement with arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori.
 2. Government acknowledges Māori arts, culture and heritage as taonga and important to New Zealand's culture and identity, and partners with Māori to enable their cultural aspirations.
 3. Government values all creative work, people, and audiences, and takes the unique attributes and benefits of the creative and cultural sectors into account during policy development and investment.
 4. Government provides support for creative and cultural practitioners at all stages of their development, and clear pathways into work that uses their skills.
 5. Government works to connect New Zealand creatives to local and global audiences.
- The logic pathway for this proposed structure again acknowledges the multifaceted positive impact that can emerge from proactive lifelong engagement with creative practice as a contributor to a range of skill-based and health-based outcomes, among other measures.
- This pathway also prioritises the importance of te ao Māori as a taonga to Aotearoa, and also acknowledges the significant role that Māori culture plays in the global reputation of this country, and the importance of iwi and hapu as kaitiaki of this taonga. Tangata whenua are essential partners in this mahi.

- This then also supports the broader measurable and immeasurable impacts and benefits that emerge from the work of creative people and acknowledges the importance of supportive pathways for developing and utilising skills and also connecting with audiences.
- These principles also suggest the whole-of-government approach required in activating this strategy. Acknowledging what MCH can do, but articulating where that sits with other Ministries (Education, Trade, Business, Tourism, Health etc), where it intersects with other agencies (CNZ, NZFC, NZonAir, Te Mangai Paho, Lotteries Commission etc) and other organisations (Toi Mai, Tertiary and Vocational Education providers, Regional Arts Organisations etc)

5. Strategic Pillar: Investing for Maximum Impact

- We support the broad concept of investing strategically in positive impacts for the sector and Aotearoa more generally.
- It would be useful to understand how investment potentially aligns with this strategy, and how the more community and development focussed elements of this strategy can be prioritised alongside the more specific economic measures.
- We want to indicate the importance of the significant impact regularly made by community activated organisations and individuals of the creative sector who offer vital opportunities in all regions for social impact, education, skill development, connection, strengthening local identity, and community cohesion - which also require continued investment. The impacts of these activities are significant, but can be harder to pinpoint in solely economic terms.
- We specifically support that “the government will continue to invest in creative activity that has social benefits.”
- **PRIORITY AREAS:**
 - *“Work across government to enable the creative and cultural sectors to support cross-portfolio outcomes, for example supporting improved health outcomes, or supporting rehabilitation and reducing reoffending in the justice system”*
 - This is an exciting opportunity for the government to work with the sector to support broader benefits for New Zealand. Cross-portfolio outcomes in health, justice, education, and other social impacts are an area of significant potential. Especially where it also creates work for artists.
 - At Creative Waikato we have tangible examples of how these initiatives can be run with local communities (see the Creative Waikato ‘Whiria te Tāngata’ programme as an example¹). We also acknowledge the work of Arts Access Aotearoa and the positive impact of the ‘Creative Spaces’ and ‘Arts-in-Corrections’ programmes².

¹ <https://creativewaikato.co.nz/whiria-te-tangata>

² <https://artsaccess.org.nz/Creative+Spaces>

- How are social impact opportunities being connected to arts and creativity? This is important around access, connection to regional, rural and diverse communities, and the infrastructure (both soft and hard) required to enable these things.
- Cross-portfolio or cross-sector collaboration can be effective, but it often requires additional time and resources to shape the systems for it to flourish.
- *“Incentivise collaboration and the building of capability to attract audiences to creative content”*
 - Collaboration has significant potential - but it also can be more time consuming and complicated as relationships are developed.
 - Consider in this area how communities of practice can be supported in local communities as pathways for capability building, and how strategic collaboration can be facilitated and supported as a development pathway.
 - Audience development has connections to relationship building and establishing trust which takes time. International models don’t directly transfer in Aotearoa, so local approaches can be effective. (See Creative Waikato Audience Development resources³ as example)
- *“Develop a research programme to strengthen the evidence base for the creative and cultural sectors, led by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage”*
 - We support the concepts of ‘strategic evidence-based investment’ and ‘greater collaboration and information sharing’.
 - As a stakeholder who invests in research⁴ (particularly around engagement, participation and wellbeing) we understand how important it is to have a shared approach in engaging in this work. It can strengthen impact, understanding, and growing of a local and relevant pool of understanding.
 - We encourage a sector-connected approach, with regional involvement to better leverage meaningful outcomes for local communities.
- *“Develop a structure for central government funding of the creative and cultural sectors that simplifies access and purposefully leverages other sources of funding, for example local government, iwi and private funding”*
 - We support an approach that simplifies access to funding. It is essential to utilise trust-based approaches that work towards clear strategic outcomes for local communities.

³ <https://creativewaikato.co.nz/workshop/audience-development-toolkits>

⁴ <https://creativewaikato.co.nz/advocacy/researchandreports>

- We acknowledge the already-significant contributions that are made by local government and community philanthropy and wonder how this might be strategically grown when so many of those sources are already oversubscribed. There are opportunities to work with local government for shared outcomes.
 - We acknowledge the already-significant vision and contributions from Iwi and hapu leadership around taonga, ngā toi Māori and creative opportunities in this space. Also their commitment to preserving local taonga and mātauranga for future generations. Meaningful partnership with Iwi can be a powerful opportunity if approached with manaakitanga and respect.
 - We hope this aims to deliver direct support to artists and addresses equity of access to funding in regional areas.
 - Creative Waikato also acknowledges the trust-based relationships we have with local funders and wish to highlight co-funding models for localised impact (like the Regional Sports Trusts) as examples for how additional support could be leveraged for this sector. (See the RANA Business Case examples⁵ for more information)
 - Creative Waikato (regional arts organisation) and Trust Waikato (community philanthropic trust) are keen to talk with the Minister and Ministry about how our model works and the potential for this as a component of strategic national infrastructure to contribute to many of the actions and targets outlined in this strategy.
- *“Partner with sector representative bodies and Māori and Pacific creative and cultural practitioners to grow creative exports”*
- We support the idea of partnering with Māori and Pacific creative practitioners to help celebrate this unique cultural expression as a taonga of Aotearoa
 - We would like to encourage engaging with regional practitioners through hapu and Iwi to support stronger pathways.

6. Strategic Pillar: Nurturing Talent

- We acknowledge and support the framing of creative skills as “an asset to both New Zealanders working in the creative and cultural sectors, and those working in the wider workforce. Access to creativity and a sense of cultural identity can also improve wider outcomes, in areas such as education (in both creative and non-creative subjects), health, and social cohesion.”
- We support the importance of creativity in core school curriculum at all levels of education. Prioritising this can have significant positive impacts on the future potential of our young people.

⁵ <https://www.rana.org.nz/s/RANA-business-case.pdf>

- There is a growing call from a broad range of sectors (construction, manufacturing, management, law, health, tech) for people who have the skills of creativity, communication and storytelling. Arts-based education is an essential development pathway for these things.
- We also fully support the importance of strengthening the capability building and pathways for creative practitioners who will need to navigate portfolio careers. This requires ongoing accessible skills development
- As a capability building organisation we see first-hand the need for this type of work, and advocate for greater sustained support for this mahi.

This pillar is of significant importance in setting the foundational framework for future success. There are a number of priorities to highlight.

- **PRIORITY AREAS:**

- *“Develop a creative education work programme to increase learners’ exposure to New Zealand creative and cultural activity through the school curricula, working with sector partners”*
 - Creativity in education is a key driver for future success. Support needs to be given to educators to develop confidence and capability in enabling students to regularly engage with creative opportunities.
 - There is potential to explore the idea of “Teaching Artists-in-residence” – creative practitioners who supplement the pathways for creativity in the classroom. Regional Arts Organisations can be a conduit with local schools to support this activation and build collective capability in this area.
 - It is important to see creativity as a component that supports all elements of the education programmes, not just as an additional subject. This includes prioritising STEAM approaches (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics), and looking at ways to utilise creative and soft skills as foundational components to all future educational approaches.
 - Arts and creative practice can be useful pathways into a mixed learning environment that supports the development of vital soft skills that have lasting benefit beyond schooling.
 - Creative Waikato has developed a number of resources to support this initiative and look forward to the potential to work with the government on enabling this activity to happen. See [this handbook](#)⁶ and these [core subject resources](#)⁷ as examples.
 - It is important to note the significant contribution from community organisations in the education pathways for people of all ages. Working with local arts and creative organisations to supplement the educational opportunities for people at all ages can make a significant difference to support more people engaging in the sector.

⁶ https://creativewaikato.co.nz/site/uploads/Creativity-in-Education-Handbook_Screen_Aug24.pdf

⁷ <https://creativewaikato.co.nz/creative-resources/creative-education-resources>

- Artist-led education-aligned initiatives could be explored through the Kāhui Ako Communities of Learning already established with shared engagement with local artists to support learning outcomes.
- *“Provide capability training for creative and cultural organisations’ governance bodies, including in supporting their organisations to be financially stable, grow audiences and diversify funding”*
 - Capability development is important for organisations at all levels of the creative ecosystem, from grassroots groups through to professional creative companies.
 - Having a mechanism to support the delivery of capability training can be a great pathway to enabling localised support, whilst ideally being connected to a national network of service delivery to create scalable impact and engagement. The [RANA network](#) provides one example as a delivery partner in this.
 - Creative Waikato has developed a [number of workshops](#)⁸ for creative and cultural organisations around finance and funding, governance, strategic planning, audience development and more. We look forward to potentially working with the government to expand the reach and impact of this activity.
- *“Explore the viability of the establishment and expansion of regional centres of excellence to promote creative and cultural sector growth, including supporting the sustainable practice of ngā toi Māori”*
 - There is clear value in having regional centres of excellence as places to enhance communities of practice and strengthen creative sector growth.
 - We also acknowledge the multifaceted nature of creative practice in smaller communities and regions and highlight that having regional bodies who provide support for creative sector development (with capability building, and pathway support) can be an important contribution to the strengthening of the national ecosystem.
 - The Regional Arts Network Aotearoa provides some initial thinking around a model that could be developed to enable localised access and support through a national collaborative approach that shares resource, understanding, insights and connections, while also harnessing local understanding and connections, valuing the needs and focus areas of those regional communities.
 - This RANA approach also acknowledges the importance of regional understanding and partnership with Iwi and hapū. This must be central to any regional activity.

⁸ <https://creativewaikato.co.nz/workshop/artreach>

- *“Partner with creative industry representatives to support skills development of creative professionals (including new sector qualifications) and improve the vocational education system to meet industry needs”*
 - This is an interesting development with potential connections to the vocational education network. This aligns with the work of Toi Mai. Timing should be considered here with the restructure of Te Pūkenga and how that might impact regional creative training programmes.
 - It is important to note the self-employed/SME model of many creative practitioners and consider how that can be supported in regional centres. There are a range of soft skills and transferable skills required to make sustainable careers in the arts.
 - This also has connections to the work enabled through the Creative Careers pilot programme which provides useful insights and pathways. There are also opportunities in alignment with the regional business partners network and where creative providers could contribute to that model.

- *“Partner with ngā Toi Māori organisations, mātanga toi, iwi and hapori Māori to strengthen infrastructure for the health and sustainability of Māori arts, culture and heritage”*
 - We support working in partnership with Māori to support the development and sustainability of Toi and Maturanga Māori.
 - Ensuring this approach is led by hapū and iwi will support this partnership being responsive to the needs of local communities.

7. Strategic Pillar: Reducing Barriers to Growth

- We support the concept of examining the levers for policy or system change within government regulation as a potential contributor to sustainable growth and community development.
- There is value in looking at support for creatives and their IP and how that can be better managed and understood.
- Acknowledging also the impact of building density on noise levels in city environments and how that can influence the creative life of a city is also important to address, in order to keep live performance thriving and contributing to the character of our cities.
- It is important to have government legislation up to date with shifts in systems and technologies.
- PRIORITY AREAS:
 - *“Work across government to respond to intellectual property risks to creative and cultural works, including ngā toi Māori, with a focus on stopping misappropriation of cultural works”*

- Protecting IP, particularly in connection to taonga and te ao Māori, is significant. These elements must acknowledge tikanga, and also keep those things safe.
- It is essential to strengthen understanding and application of that understanding with the guidance of Māori cultural practitioners.
- *“Provide support for cultural and creative practitioners and businesses to navigate the tax system, with a particular focus on those with complex income streams”*
 - Supporting those creatives as small business owners to simplify processes and save time has the potential to make a positive contribution.
 - There is a challenge in how you communicate this with creative practitioners. Having arts organisations delivering this work can help with sector-specific understanding and terminology that can get lost in translation.
- *“Support the creative and cultural sectors’ uptake of new technology, including responsible use and development of AI, and take a cross-government approach to address the opportunities and challenges of using AI in creative work”*
 - AI presents a challenge for the sector in a number of ways. It may support some elements of this work, but it is important to also acknowledge the risks around workers rights, creative jobs, IP, and protection of taonga.
 - It is also significant to acknowledge the climate implications of this technology through power use, water use, and computing power. It is important to strategically question these developments in the current environment.
 - This priority area is significant and complex. There are questions of digital literacy, access in remote communities, large-scale education programmes, evolution of thinking and perception of value, and the development of national understanding of the nature of IP and how it is utilised, shared and maintained. This also requires significant investment in societal understanding of critical reflection, source analysis, sustainability, and a refinement of selection processes to sense check outcomes to support actual implementation of these tools and technologies.
 - This would require significant government investment, training and support to enable this to be done in a responsible way that should “lead to creative work opportunities evolving, rather than disappearing, and will respond to concerns about work being misused.”
 - How would the support and capability building required to do this at a national level be operationalised without additional investment? Will there be equal opportunities for those in regional and rural communities?

- *“Work across government to identify and update regulation that impacts on the creative and cultural sectors’ ability to grow and produce creative work, such as the Public Lending Right for New Zealand Authors Act, the Copyright Act”*
 - It is important to support creatives in connection to protection of IP and how that can be a component of their sustainable careers.
 - There is a complexity around how this value growth can be actualised when the value proposition for certain royalty components have been minimised by international business systems (see royalty payments for online music streaming). Is that within the realm of government influence?
 - There is consideration needed here at a local government level as well as components of this work are delivered at that level, so will have implications there.
 - Other regulatory considerations could be around infrastructure and the creative organisations in heritage buildings that face significant earthquake strengthening requirements with shrinking funding and capital investment.

8. Broader considerations

This strategy has been of interest to the creative sector for a number of years, but it also lands in a complex context for the people connected to the sector as well as the broader communities of participants and audiences. As a society we face increased lack of social cohesion, increasing levels of stress and anxiety, and concern around cost of living. This is especially true for many people in the creative and cultural sector.

It is positive to see that this strategy outlines intentions beyond purely economic means and presents exciting intentions for how the government can work alongside the sector through the potential in creative and cultural work for moments of joy, development opportunity, and bringing people together.

The potential in this work is if we can set conditions for more New Zealanders to be actively engaged in the arts, culture and creative sector, then they will be more likely to value this work and its multifaceted impact, which will contribute to increasing creative income, which will enable more people to champion and celebrate the work internationally, which will ultimately contribute to economic development for Aotearoa.

The potential is there. It now requires a collaborative pathway for meaningful action.

- Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Maaori can make significant contributions to thriving communities if they are supported. The community already makes a significant contribution to these areas through investment, in-kind support, volunteer time, and creative skill; it is essential that this continues to be supported to enable needed social outcomes.

- The creative sector is one of the fastest growing sectors for economic development in Aotearoa, with the potential for international export alongside local activation. Community activity creates essential learning and development pathways for creative professionals.
- Artistic activity is a contributor to vibrant and thriving places, and the wellbeing of communities, both now and in the future. But it needs to remain accessible. It would be good to see more specific acknowledgement of actions around accessibility, support for diverse communities, and how to activate participation in communities.
- Engagement in creative activity in and around the workplace makes measurable contributions to productivity, innovation, and mental health.
- Impact is not only measured in terms of financial return and asset utilisation, but also wellbeing, and the ways in which these experiences contribute to things like community cohesion, connection to place and land and self.
- The impacts of the creative community on social and cultural wellbeing are also significant. In-depth [Waikato-focussed research from 2022](#)⁹ showed that regular access and perceived access to arts, culture and creativity is a significant driver of individual wellbeing. This can contribute to better mental health outcomes, but also shows measurable connection to social cohesion, community connection, civic pride, and sense of identity.

9. Conclusion

Creative Waikato appreciates being able to share this fulsome response to “Amplify: A Creative and Cultural Strategy for New Zealand (Draft) 2024–2030”. We acknowledge the significant work that goes into the development and implementation of strategic documents, and want to formally recognise the work of the team at Manatū Taonga for their mahi on this project.

We present this submission for consideration and welcome any follow up discussions or future engagement around other iterations of this work.

Creative Waikato is happy to provide supporting documentation in regards to initiatives, resources and programme design that exists in alignment with these high level strategic outlines, and looks forward to the potential to work with the Minister and Ministry on implementation of these opportunities.

Submitted by:

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On behalf of Creative Waikato
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⁹ https://creativewaikato.co.nz/site/uploads/HS_Creative-Waikato_Wellbeing-and-Arts-Culture-and-Creativity-in-the-Waikato_FINAL.pdf