

Letter in Support of Wintec Arts Programmes

To whom it may concern,

The arts can change the world. Support for arts education is necessary for a thriving society. This is particularly true today.

It is concerning to hear in the media about the potential cuts to various programmes in the School of Media Arts at Wintec. Of course, we can acknowledge the complexities of the tertiary education funding environment, the additional burden of having to disestablish Te Pūkenga before it had fully had the chance to function, and the impacts of COVID, but there are significant concerns when a significant decision like this is made based purely with a view for value-engineering and cost cutting, without encouraging an opportunity to create a new path.

The last 2 years has seen the release of the Waikato Performing Arts Strategy, the development of the Waikato Regional Theatre, the development and release of the Toi Mai Workforce Development Plan for Performing Arts, and the most recent release of the 'AMPLIFY' draft arts and culture strategy for Aotearoa. The common thread of all these things is that vocational education is an essential component of supporting pathway development in alignment with the goals of these projects.

The last round of redesign and programme development has been clouded with other external issues from outside of the realm of control of the School of Media Arts, but these things have had a measurable impact. To then potentially cut the programmes, just as momentum was building, could place our region at a significant cultural and social deficit.

As a Regional Arts Organisation we have seen first-hand how staff, students, and graduates of these programmes feed into the growth, development and emerging success of the local ecosystem. These programmes exist as more than educational products and financial spreadsheet data. They exist to connect people, to share stories, to highlight the potential of this region, and to support communities across all sectors in having people who can imagine new possibilities, craft compelling stories, and communicate them effectively.

As a strategic regional arts organisation we offer to meet with Wintec leadership to explore opportunities to proactively support the future of these programmes in our communities.

Ngā mihi,



Dr. Jeremy Mayall
CEO