

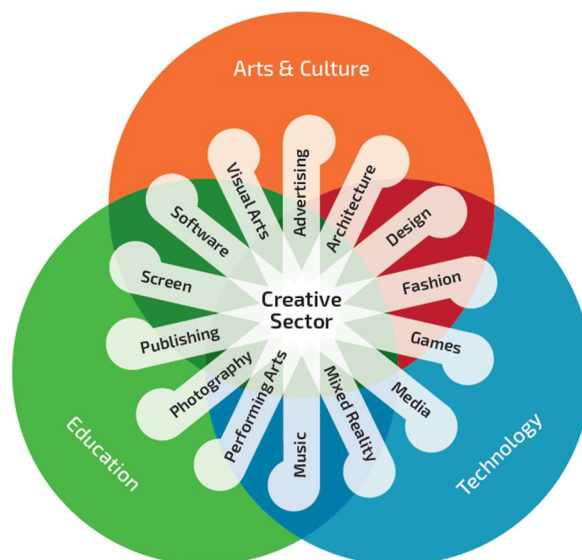
Submission to Amplify – A Creative and Cultural Strategy for New Zealand (Draft) December 2024

WeCreate¹ is the alliance of Aotearoa’s major creative industry associations and organisations, representing 30,000+ Kiwi creators, support people, and creative businesses. The organisation was founded in 2014 to propel growth in the sector and increase its contribution to New Zealand’s social, cultural, and economic, wellbeing.

We acknowledge and thank Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage for providing opportunities for WeCreate Members and creative sector businesses to engage and share views from the sector ahead of the preparation of this submission.

We have only submitted on the actions relevant to WeCreate’s membership at a sector-level. Many of our individual Member and Friend organisations will make submissions in more detail on matters pertaining to their own industries and areas of interest, and we are aware that MCH has also consulted with creative education experts.

We also have some recommendations for ‘quick wins’ and several questions regarding the draft strategy, which are detailed at the end of this document.



CONTEXT FOR THIS SUBMISSION

WeCreate have been advocating for a creative and cultural sector strategy in partnership with government for nearly a decade. In 2017 and 2018 WeCreate hosted two Creative Economy Conversations, with the sector and with the National, and the subsequent Labour, governments, that resulted in the development of the [WeCreate Action Plan](#). The pillars in the Action Plan are Connection & Collaboration, Export, Education, Skills, Talent & Capability, Regulation, Measurement & Research, and Capacity & Investment. The Action Plan categorises the recommendations into actions for the sector to take itself; for the sector with government; and for the government to complete.

¹ Readers of this document who are not familiar with WeCreate’s work may wish to watch this short [video](#)

Amplify is described as “an action-oriented strategy that outlines how the Government will prioritise support for our creative and cultural sectors”. In line with this, our submission focusses on areas of activity where the government can swiftly act to improve the operating environment for growth in the sector, and where the government can support the sector to do more through amplifying activity that is already underway.

As shown in the diagram above, the sector is an ecosystem with interconnections between the individual creative industries, and with education, technology and arts & culture. Many of the people who work in the sector (which is dominated by freelancers and contractors who often perform different roles in different industries, according to their specialism), earn from its various parts, and careful consideration should be given to policy approaches that attempt to “box” or separate one part of the sector from another.

SUBMISSION

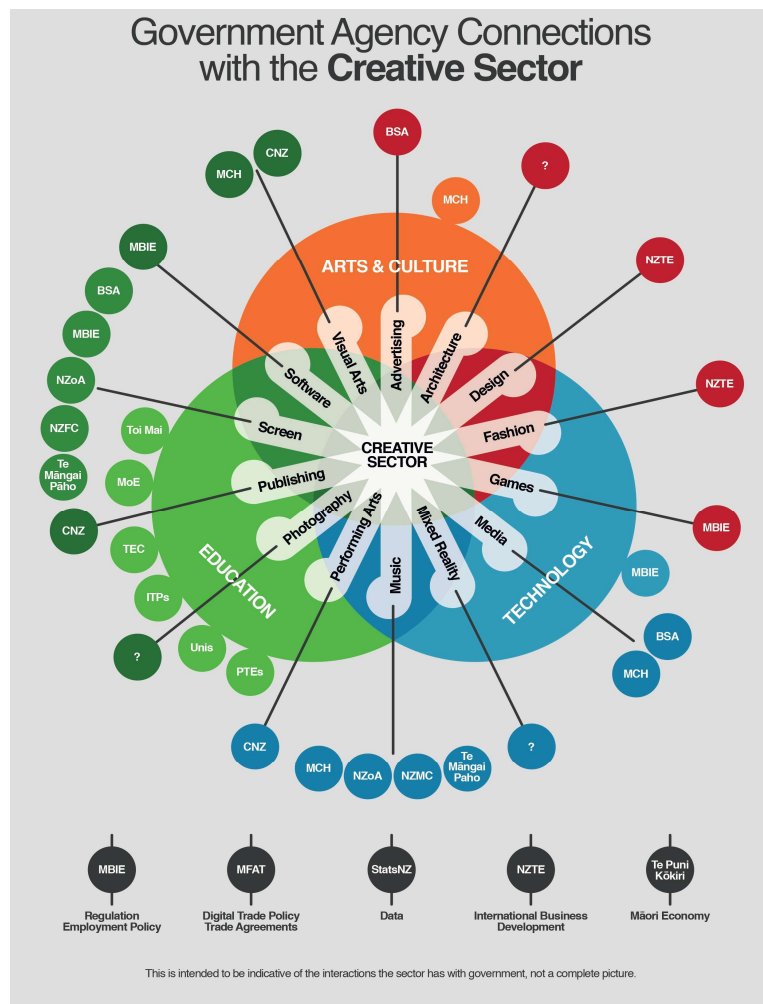
The Structure of Government

The sector has always been at the forefront of both technological developments and changes in business models to meet audience and customer demands. Technological change is happening [faster](#) than at any other time in history and the Government’s responsiveness to these shifts needs radical improvement - in how government structures itself to deliver for the sector, and in the timeliness and effectiveness of legislative change. This is particularly critical in a country the size of New Zealand where we need all of the players in the ecosystem – including government, local government, investors & philanthropists – to be aligned as much as possible.

In 2023, WeCreate included the following diagram in a Briefing to the Incoming Minister. We noted that “to leverage the sector’s economic contribution and export growth potential, policy affecting the creative industries needs to go beyond the current scope of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage to reach all parts of the creative ecosystem, including education, skills development, exports, and the multiple intersections with digital technology.”

One model of government structure that has delivered significant success for the creative sector is the UK’s approach to the Creative and Cultural Industries. This includes having a high-ranking Cabinet Minister with a mandate to work across government on policy and regulatory matters that are relevant to the sector’s success. This is led by the UK’s Department Of Culture, Media and Sport.

The success of this strategy will rely on a **whole-of-government approach, especially including the Economic Development, Education, Tertiary Education and Trade Portfolios.** The sector also needs this strategy and the approach to its implementation to survive a change of government in the future, preferably by way of bi-partisan support, and take us out of the consultation-churn that has been prevalent in both central and local government for the past 5 years.



STRATEGIC PILLARS AND ACTIONS

INVESTING FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

Government's investment, including the \$450 million (please see the Questions section of this submission regarding this amount) investment in Vote Arts, Culture and Heritage, maximises value for New Zealand from the creative and cultural sectors.

- *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.*

Many creative and cultural organisations already generate significant levels of non-government funding, such as philanthropy and business sponsorship, to exist and operate. Government intervention in an attempt to further leverage from these sources risks cannibalising the investment already being relied on by the sector.

The expansion of private funding and investment for both cultural organisations and creative businesses may require some incentives, such as tax deductibility or rebates, but we understand that tax changes are out of scope for *Amplify*. We note that the [NSW government](#), in response to the Federal Government's *Revive Strategy*, has announced it *"plans to host a one-day Cultural Tax Reform Summit to hear all "reasonable ideas" on tax reform that affect the creative industries and take their findings to the federal government."*

In the UK, [the Create Growth Programme \(CGP\)](#), is a partnership between Creative UK, Innovate UK and creative businesses to propel investment in creative sector growth in the UK regions. *"Creative UK is committed to doing more than just talking about the transformative power of investment in the Creative Industries, helping over 700 businesses a year with their growth plans. The Create Growth Programme is an example of how tailored business support can be transformative, powering inclusive growth right across the nation."* Caroline Norbury OBE, Chief Executive of Creative UK,

- *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.*

The success of this strategy will rely on a whole-of-government approach, especially including Economic Development, Education, Tertiary Education, Technology, and Trade portfolios, alongside the above.

- *Partner with sector representative bodies and Māori and Pacific creative and cultural practitioners to grow creative exports.*

WeCreate is currently producing a **'Creative Export Explainer'** document, in response to the government's goal of 'doubling export value in ten years'. This goal will require 7.2% growth per annum, a rate which has not been seen in the last 30 years, when export returns have averaged 4.5% pa.

New Zealand's traditional export sectors are at significant risk from the impacts of climate change, geopolitical conflicts, and potential new tariffs. The forthcoming Trump administration of the USA has indicated it may inflict 10-20% of tariffs on New Zealand goods imports - *'...it could end up costing our exporters somewhere north of \$750 million if applied across the board.'*, Fran O'Sullivan, NZ Herald, 23 November 2024.

Global trade is set to reach a record \$33 trillion in 2024, according to the latest [Global Trade Update](#) published by UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on 5 December, 2024. Robust growth in services trade, up 7% for the year, accounted for half of the expansion, while goods trade rose 2% but remained below its 2022 peak.

We have an unrealised opportunity to grow export revenues through shifting some of New Zealand's trade focus to creative, and particularly creative digital, services exports – which largely do not face the same risks and barriers as goods trade.

In 2023, the entertainment and media (E&M) industry recovered its balance. In the face of economic headwinds and technological disruptions, total global revenue rose 5% to US\$2.8 trillion in 2023 – easily outpacing overall economic growth. Over the next five years, the E&M complex will grow at a more muted 3.9% CAGR, in 2028, total revenues will top US\$3.4 trillion.

Disruption, presenting opportunities and risks, continues to break over the sector. Linear value chains are disaggregating as we move into a world dominated by digital ecosystems.

PwC's ['Perspectives from the Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2024-28'](#)

- New Zealand's creative exports were estimated by United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to be over US\$2.5 billion (NZ\$4.1 billion) in 2022.
- Much of New Zealand's creative export growth has come from creative services in recent years, growing at a compound annual average of 9% since 2015. This means that New Zealand's creative service exports have nearly doubled in value from 2015-2022 (UNCTAD 2022).
- While these data are not available below the country level, we know that Auckland accounts for over 50% of New Zealand's creative industries employment and GDP. We also know that Auckland accounts for 60% of New Zealand's information media services exports, which include screen, publishing and web streaming industries, and are the largest contributor to our creative sector exports (Infometrics).
- Tātaki Auckland Unlimited reported that international screen productions (i.e. creative exports) in Auckland from June to December 2024 are estimated to earn \$350m of foreign exchange (before the NZSPR incentive of 20-25% is allocated).
- Most creative businesses can export globally, weightlessly and often tariff-free.
- Many creative businesses can 'go global' from day one of launching a product or service.
- Digital creative exports are largely controlled by the dominant global tech platforms such as Apple, STEAM, Netflix and Spotify, with whom NZ does not have government trade relationships. Some other countries, such as Denmark, do focus on these platform relationships via specific trade missions and national representation in Silicon Valley and other global tech hubs.
- Highly successful Kiwi creative exporters range from well-known large high-tech companies such as Wētā Digital and Les Mills International, to lesser known individuals such as multi-billion-streaming songwriter/producer Joel Little. And there are some anomalous export successes in our creative ecosystem such as Legend Story – who are employing hundreds of freelance artists and bringing in millions of dollars in export revenues from selling trading cards across the world.
- There is a marked absence in New Zealand of reliable local data on export revenues generated by our creative, and especially creative digital, trade. Our industries and occupations are not accurately reflected in most government data, which means that neither industry, or government, have an accurate picture of what they are currently worth – nor what their potential might be.

New Zealand is not currently in the best position to compete assertively across the world, nor make fit-for-purpose trade policy and agreements, for our creative and creative tech exporters, unless overdue changes are made to government's prioritisation of these high value exporters, along with changes in our trade agencies' expertise and investment in these sectors and businesses.

Other countries have recognised the potential of creative exports and have positioned them at the forefront of their export strategies - notably the UK, Ireland, South Korea and Australia.

The UK's Creative Industries Trade & Investment Board's strategy 2022-2025 sets out their ambition to collectively achieve £78 billion in exports by 2030

[from £50bn in 2020 – 56% growth]

McKinsey Global Institute's '[Next Big Arenas of Competition](#)' report (Oct 2024) identified 18 potential arenas of the future that could reshape the global economy, generating \$29 trillion to \$48 trillion in revenues by 2040. Among these arenas are:

- Digital advertising
- Streaming video
- Video games
- AI software and services

Growth in New Zealand's creative exports will rely on the concerted co-operation of MCH, MFAT, NZTE, and MBIE in particular; working and investing strategically with WeCreate, and creative export businesses and industry organisations.

What could New Zealand achieve with a government trade system that supports, and has expertise in creative trade?

***'Our next international economic wave must be an IP (Intellectual Property) wave – we can't grow any more land'* James Graham, CEO Global Markets, Les Mills International**

- ***Develop a research programme to strengthen the evidence base for the creative and cultural sectors, led by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage.***

A fit-for-purpose evidence base to support both this strategy, and the ever-evolving nature of the creative sector, is a vital component for achieving economic growth. ANZSIC and ANZSOC codes have not kept pace with sector developments, particularly in relation to occupations, and emerging industries and art forms; and there is no government data available on creative digital exports.

WeCreate has convened a Creative Sector Data & Insights Working Group across government which has met several times a year since 2019. This group currently includes officials from MCH, MBIE, StatsNZ, Creative NZ, NZ On Air, TEC, Toi Mai, NZTE, NZ Story and Tātaki Auckland Unlimited who share information on their research work programmes in order to enhance the others' projects, and to avoid duplication.

We understand from our regular engagement with StatsNZ that they are currently restructuring, and several key positions have been disestablished.

- *Explore options for government to support the creative and cultural sectors through immigration settings, for example through visa requirements.*

Individual creative industries have differing immigration needs – from supporting local music by requiring international touring artists to hire local support acts, to video game developers needing to be able to get visas to employ international senior talent to grow their businesses. We submit that MCH and WeCreate collaborate on identifying the key immigration needs of individual creative industries.

- *Identify opportunities to promote existing creative and cultural events to showcase our unique cultures globally and boost cultural tourism.*

In our view, identifying these opportunities will be an easy task. However, showcasing and promotion of creative and cultural events would require the co-operation of local government, Tourism NZ and NZ Story – none of which appear to be currently resourced to undertake such work.

During the course of the consultation sessions for this strategy that we attended, several individual industries (including publishing and interactive/gaming) expressed the need to showcase their work at international trade shows in order to generate export growth. Little or no government investment is available, outside of small amounts for screen and music, to support this need.

NURTURING TALENT

Supporting New Zealand’s creative and cultural talent pipeline and sustainable career opportunities.

We submit that the current government is not investing enough in the skills, competencies, and support for talent in knowledge-based and tech industries, that will propel economic growth, and prepare New Zealanders to succeed in the future of work.

- *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.*

Creative education in schools has declined significantly in recent years. The disestablishment of ‘Creatives in Schools’ has added to this decline, and caused loss of income for the artists who participated in the scheme.

There are multiple sources of evidence which support our view that **creative learning assists all learning**, such as the many studies showing the link between learning music and developing maths skills.

The World Government Summit & PwC’s 2022 report [*‘The Future of Work and Education’*](#) states:

‘...the priority for governments must be to identify the key sectors for growth, assess the potential of its workforce to meet the talent demand, evaluate the cost benefits of upskilling, and introduce practical measures that activate employers, educators and learners.

If disruption, uncertainty and growing inequality is to be avoided, and if opportunities in the digital, technological and green arenas in particular are to be grasped, then the imperative for reskilling those already in the workforce, and providing the skills necessary for new arrivals to thrive, is one of the most urgent matters facing governments and business.’

'The rise of automation and digitization has transformed the world of work but created a major societal problem - the mismatch of people with the right skills for the available jobs' Bob Moritz - Chair of PwC at the WEF in Davos 2021

The New Zealand education curriculum is not keeping pace with the skills requirements of our future economy, nor with global education trends - leaving our workforce ill-prepared for occupations and employment. The [World Economic Forum 'Future of Jobs'](#) 2023 report states that surveyed organisations rated **Creative Thinking** as the number one 'Skill on the Rise', with **Technology Literacy** at number three.

Awaiting the scheduled refresh of the Arts and Toi Ihiihi curricula in 2027, which will likely take a further year at least to complete ahead of implementation, means that a generation of primary school students may miss out on creative education, putting their future working prospects at risk.

We submit that Minister Goldsmith and MCH must engage with the Minister, and the Ministry, of Education without delay – not only in order to reinstate 'Creatives in Schools', but also to respond to the recommendations made by your consultation with creative education experts regarding this strategy.

- *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.*

MCH Infometrics data shows that the our creative sector has the highest level of self-employment in our economy, yet New Zealand's vocational education system remains geared to the traditional employer/employee model.

The creative industries are already highly engaged in supporting skills development through the excellent work of the Workforce Development Council for Creative, Cultural, Sport/Recreation and Technology – Toi Mai. Toi Mai have published many in-depth reports on the future workforce needs of several creative industries which can be found at www.toimai.nz. Their future is however in doubt due to the current reform of vocational education.

WeCreate also convenes monthly with CreaTer – the alliance of New Zealand's creative tertiary educators – which we co-founded in 2019. Many of the former creative vocational education providers who were part of Te Pūkenga are at risk of being disestablished, and many are cutting creative courses in order to become more 'financially viable'. Creative courses are more expensive to run than many other subjects as they can require specialist equipment and spaces. As an example, Toi Ohomai fears that it will have to drop all arts courses at its Rotorua campus.

CreaTer vocational education providers are crying out for NZQA to allow them to provide **micro-credentials, especially in business skills and work readiness for the creative industries**. Whilst some work is being done by **NZQA to modernise some of their qualification standards**, this is a slow process, and we fear it will not keep pace with the rate of change needed for confident future careers in the sector. For example, one CreaTer member recently said that the skills development need he had received the most enquiries about was 'AI Prompt Engineer'.

The creative industries, Toi Mai, and CreaTer are advocating for **government-supported creative workplace learning, internships and apprenticeships**, which are common in other more traditional industries and which will help propel sector growth. There has already been considerable work done on this matter by both industry organisations and Toi Mai.

We submit that it is critical for Minister Goldsmith and MCH to move swiftly to engage with the Minister for Tertiary Education and TEC - to provide the skills development opportunities which will be needed to nurture future talent in the creative sector, to protect Toi Mai, and to lessen the diminishing of creative vocational education currently underway across the country.

- *Explore the viability of the establishment and expansion of regional centres of excellence to facilitate creative and cultural sector growth and excellence, including supporting the sustainable practice of ngā toi Māori.*

The UK government has invested in ‘creative clusters’ for some years now. The 2023 [‘Geographies of Creativity’](#) report by the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre shines a light on the role of micro-clusters in the creative industries, and explains why creative clusters are good targets for intervention and investment, and a key engine for economic growth in the UK.

Several regional centres of excellence already exist in New Zealand, although not all of them are supported by government:

- [Canterbury University Dovedale Digital Screen Campus](#) – provides an Honours degree and the Kōawa initiative; giving learners greater opportunities to find high-value work in the creative technology sector (including film, sound production, animation, game development, virtual production, and indigenous narrative), with world class education, projects and facilities.

- [CODE Dunedin](#) - supports the NZ game development ecosystem by assisting diverse creators and studios to develop digital game prototypes, found new studios or expand existing companies’ ambitions. CODE is funded by the Kānoa - Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit and MBIE, with an explicit remit to build the capacity of individuals and entities to drive innovation, revenue and jobs in the game development sector.

- [TORO Academy Gisborne](#) - creates training pathways enabling local youth and career changers to access both the local and global production, animation and creative tech industries, whilst remaining connected to Te Ao Māori.

We submit that MCH consult with industry leaders via WeCreate, as to their needs for regional centres of excellence, as many clusters appear to achieve better outcomes when they comprise a conglomeration of different but interdependent creative businesses.

REDUCING BARRIERS TO GROWTH

Modernising and streamlining government regulation so it enables the creative and cultural sectors to thrive.

The government’s **process of policy development and legislative review is not fit-for-purpose for a sector that is subject to rapid changes in technology development.** As with other aspects of delivering *Amplify*, legislative change also requires prioritisation and resource – both within government and from the sector.

It is critical that officials involved in regulatory reviews are knowledgeable about the sector and willing to listen to, and act on, the experiences the sector can bring to the table.

Much of this sector engagement will come from non-profit associations and organisations that do not have access to the same resources as government and other stakeholder groups or entities. This should be factored into any review process in order to produce more equitable outcomes.

A more responsive and fit-for-purpose approach also needs to be required of agencies other than MCH/Manatū Taonga which are responsible for various legislation, regulation and policy development that impacts the sector, eg. MBIE for the Copyright Act and DIA for the Public Lending Right.

This is where the all-of-government approach to the sector for the delivery of *Amplify* will play a critical role, with Manatū Taonga and the Minister having mechanisms available to require timelines and actions of other agencies to match those set out in the strategy.

Over the past two decades the business of the creative and cultural sector has been highly impacted – both positively and negatively – by the growth of the Big Tech companies. We have seen in New Zealand, and in many other countries, significant investments by these companies in ensuring that legislative developments are either stymied or neutralised to suit their commercial interests.

We submit that the New Zealand government must prioritise New Zealand creative professionals and creative businesses during regulatory review, including the needs and priorities of iwi Māori in relation to traditional knowledge and cultural expression and the Te Pae Tawhiti work programme.

- *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*

We acknowledge that MCH is currently working on a LTIB and that the topic relates to technology development. The LTIB has a future focus but the impact of technology on the creative and cultural sectors is a very present, and pressing, matter that requires action now.

WeCreate and our Members have been working with the AI Forum NZ as the AI Blueprint for Aotearoa has been developed (an updated version is due to be released in January). A Creative Industries workstream is included in the AI Blueprint. The premise for Aotearoa's creative industries success with AI is technology that is transparent and trusted, and that it is culturally distinctive through a special emphasis on Te Ao Māori. Key deliverables to achieve this vision are:

- Establishing a regulatory sandbox for the development of legislation that will effectively shape New Zealand-made AI to be transparent, trustworthy and ethical
- A quality mark for AI that is made in Aotearoa
- Implementing a long-term strategy in the education sector to grow the future creative tech workforce
- Establishing centres of excellence for creative AI, along with cataloguing datasets of creative inputs that are available for licensing to the centres of excellence

While MBIE may be leading a work programme on AI, we submit that MCH and the creative sector must also be at the table to ensure this work is informed by the knowledge and the experiences of the sector. This will ensure that actions taken are both future-focussed, and are those that address the already-known issues, including those related to IP and Copyright. AI development doesn't only bring in questions of Intellectual Property. There are also privacy considerations and, in countries like New Zealand where we respect indigenous culture – the rights of Māori to their data, traditional knowledge and cultural expression² are also important considerations.

² We understand that Te Puni Kōkiri are engaged with the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee work programme on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore.

While there are [numerous litigations](#) underway elsewhere in the world with regard to AI, the New Zealand government is taking a wait-and-see approach to regulation here which, we submit, is not going to support the country to make the gains the technology may bring, or to address the clearly identifiable issues. This is not only related to Copyright infringement in the inputs and outputs of AI systems, but also the application of Copyright protection that enables monetisation of creative work.

Additionally, many creative professionals rely on their image, their voice and their personality to earn a living. Whilst we all have human rights in NZ, additional IP rights such as the Right of Publicity or Personality Rights that are specific to aspects of being a creative professional are not currently recognised here.

Technology policy development is another area of government where the *Amplify* strategy must be a vehicle for the creative sector's experiences to be considered and acted upon.

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

WeCreate's first action, when formed in 2014, was to commission [NZIER](#) to complete a report of the impact and the structure of the creative sector. This was urgently needed as the government was not capturing this data itself. MCH now publishes the annual Infometrics Profile, which is a valued addition to the data and insights available about the sector, but there is much more to be done in order to better tell the story of the depth and breadth of the impact of the sector and, therefore, increase both the government's and New Zealanders' awareness of its value.

As noted above, WeCreate coordinates a Creative Sector Data & Insights Working Group which includes policy officials from across government. With a mandate from government and appropriate resourcing this Working Group – which includes MCH's Insights team - would be an excellent starting point for developing a roadmap to track and measure the success of *Amplify*. The Working Group has built a good overview of the existing data and insights held by both government and the sector and could also inform a gap-analysis for future data capture, including in relation to creative exports.

'QUICK WINS' TO HELP ACHIEVE THE DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THIS STRATEGY:

- Publicly support the strategy from the top (Prime Minister) down
- Invest in fit-for-purpose data and insights to more accurately portray the economic and export impacts of the sector, and to measure the success of this strategy
- Increase creative sector business expertise/capability in MCH, MBIE, Ministry of Education, TEC, TPK, NZTE and MFAT
- Develop a mechanism or framework for these agencies to work together more effectively in support of the sector
- Reinstate arts & creative education across the board – don't kick it down the road to 2027
- Meet the needs of the sector's future workforce by allowing creative education providers' requests for qualifications (especially micro-credentials) and workplace learning programmes to be implemented
- Protect Toi Mai
- Develop a meaningful creative and creative tech export strategy in collaboration with industry, NZTE, NZ Story and MFAT.

GENERAL FEEDBACK AND QUESTIONS:

2030 targets:

- **New Zealand ranks among the top 25 nations in the world for Culture and Heritage soft power.** Has expert advice been sought from NZ Story, or Brand Finance (who produce the GSPI for NZ Story), on what it would take to move 5 places up the rankings in five years?

Under the GSPI 'Culture & Heritage' pillar are several measures over which this strategy would have no influence, such as 'food the world loves' and 'leader in sports'. The 'rich heritage' measure will depend largely on how our Māori culture is perceived internationally. We have attached the latest Brand Finance GSPI report (November 2024).

- **The GDP contribution of the arts and creative sector increases to at least \$20 billion, with a focus on exports**

Infometrics data for MCH reports growth of 5.3% in the sector in the year 2022-23. Pre-Covid it had been closer to 10% in some years. For the sector to grow from \$16.3bn in 2022/23 to \$20bn in 2030, the CAGR would be just under 3%.

This does not feel like a particularly ambitious goal, given the previously achieved CAGR of the sector without a government strategy to support it. There is currently very little data available on creative, and especially creative digital, exports – a problem which is acknowledged across government – and which could substantially increase insights into this growth rate.

- **The median income for creative professionals more closely matches the median income for New Zealanders earning a wage or salary.**

What specific actions will support this other than the Artist Resale Royalty? The target should be median income "from their creative work", and not from an increase in "other" income.

Achievability:

- **How serious is government about this strategy given the 'nice to have' comments about the arts by the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers, especially with regard to creative education?**

This strategy needs to be publicly seen to have full Cabinet support for it to deliver its goals effectively.

- **How committed are other relevant Ministers and agencies (MBIE, NZTE, MFAT, NZ Story, Ministry of Education, TEC, TPK, StatsNZ, DIA) to collaborating with MCH on actions that require their involvement – and do their proposed resourcing and work programmes incorporate these actions?**

What will be the framework for cross-government collaboration?

- **Journalism and media have been excluded from the scope of this strategy 'due to significant differences in these sectors' operating environment.**

In our opinion, and that of our membership, this statement is untrue. The New Zealand domestic screen sector is in significant decline largely due to local media reducing the amount of local content they can afford to commission. This also impacts writers (some of whom may also work as journalists), musicians, advertising production companies, and many other creatives. Local broadcast and media revenues are declining due to the loss of advertising dollars to global platforms (Meta, Google et al). Journalism and media are co-dependent with many other industries in our creative ecosystem.

- **Despite this exclusion, the strategy states that \$450m is currently invested by the government in the sector when the Vote Arts, Culture and Heritage Budget appropriation for 2024/25 'includes a total of nearly \$175m for purchasing public media services mainly from broadcasting Crown Entities', as well as many millions more for heritage, commemorations and the like.**

How much of the stated \$450m is actually available to be invested in the growth of the 'creative and cultural sector' via *Amplify*?

- **The draft strategy states that it is ‘action-oriented’. We understand that there will be no further financial investment, at least in the short to medium term, but who will take the actions (do the work) required?**

Most of the Ministries and agencies WeCreate engages with seem quite stretched with their current workload, and are expecting further budget and staffing cuts in 2025/26. The Reserve Bank of NZ’s *November 2024 Monetary Policy Statement* expresses significant uncertainty about the growth of New Zealand’s economy over the next two financial years, seeing growth of just 2% and 2.2% respectively, which is likely to further impact government investment and staffing levels in those years.

Many of New Zealand’s current economic woes arise from a lack of productivity across our economy, yet the highly productive nature of some of our creative industries (‘make it once, sell it millions of times’) is largely ignored in government’s economic decision-making.

CONCLUSION

WeCreate and our Member & Friend organisations are grateful for the opportunity to provide feedback, experience, and expertise, to the Minister and Ministry on this draft strategy.

We would be delighted to offer any further information or connections that you might require in order to review the feedback you have received on the draft, and to finalise and implement the strategy.

As we have stated, WeCreate has advocated for many years for a cross-government strategic approach to the sector that includes its economic value now – and its growth in the future. We hope that this strategy can become the foundation of that growth.

Ngā mihi nui,

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WeCreate

GROWING OUR CREATIVE SECTOR
www.wecreate.org.nz

WeCreate's Members and Friends are:

Advertising & Illustrative Photographers Assn Tātaki Auckland Unlimited)	APRA AMCOS NZ
Christian Copyright Licensing International	Australia & NZ Screen Association
Commercial Communications Council	Code NZ
Creative NZ	Copyright Licensing NZ
Designco	Design Assembly
Equity NZ	Directors & Editors Guild NZ
Māori Music Industry Coalition	Independent Music NZ
Music Managers Forum NZ	Mindful Fashion NZ
NZ Film Commission	NZ Comedy Trust
NZ Institute of Architects	NZ Game Developers Association
NZ Music Commission	NZ Institute of Professional Photography
NZ Society of Authors	NZ On Air
Playmarket	NZ Writers Guild
Publishers Association of NZ	Print Media Copyright Agency
Recorded Music NZ	Radio Broadcasters Assn
Screen Industry Guild Aotearoa NZ	SAE Institute
Screenrights	Script to Screen
Screen Production and Development Association	Sky Network Television
TVNZ	Taro Patch Creative