

Review of Theatre

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND AOTEAROA

Final Report

November 2015

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1. Overview of the review and its results

During 2015 Creative New Zealand reviewed its funding priorities, programmes and initiatives for supporting New Zealand theatre.

The review considered the views of the theatre sector on what Creative New Zealand and the organisations we fund could do to further develop New Zealand theatre over the next five years.

This Final Report sets out the review recommendations that were agreed to by the Arts Council in October 2015, and discusses issues identified during the review.

Scope of the review

The review considered:

- Creative New Zealand’s responsibilities for theatre
- the key roles in theatre infrastructure that we fund
- what our priorities should be in supporting the creation, production, presentation and distribution of high-quality New Zealand theatre
- the ways in which we encourage New Zealanders to access and participate in high-quality New Zealand theatre
- our support for high-quality New Zealand theatre to gain international success.

The review took into account the current funding responsibilities of other central and local government agencies, as well as support provided by the private and not-for-profit sectors.

What we mean by ‘theatre’

Creative New Zealand uses the term ‘theatre’ to include both classical and contemporary theatre, and includes all genres such as comedy, drama, physical theatre, street theatre, musical theatre, circus, puppetry, mask, and theatre by, with and for children.

Writing for theatre (playwriting) is also assessed as part of our support for theatre. During our recent review of our support for literature, we clarified that playwrights can be considered for support from the different special opportunities, residencies and awards we administer for the literature sector.

Outcomes of the review: Summary

Over the next five years Creative New Zealand will focus on strengthening:

- audience demand for New Zealand theatre
- the diversity of theatre works presented by organisations filling a ‘Main centre’ theatre key role – in particular Māori and Pasifika theatre and work that engages with New Zealand’s diverse communities
- collaboration within the theatre sector.

To achieve this we will introduce specific requirements for each of the theatre key roles in the Toi Tōtara Haemata (Arts Leadership) investment programme.

We will also introduce new theatre funding priorities for the Toi Uru Kahikatea (Arts Development) investment programme and for the Arts Grant and Quick Response funding programmes.

Pathways for our funding and support to 2020

For the five years to 2020 Creative New Zealand intends to continue to offer the following funding and support pathways for theatre:

- longer-term support for strong, mature companies and for a range of newer companies (through our two investment programmes)
- support for time-bound projects (Arts Grants and Quick Response funding)
- support for local theatre engaging with local communities (Creative Communities Scheme)
- targeted funding to support national touring, capability-building (including audience and market development), and international presentations.

Theatre activities we will support

Through these pathways Creative New Zealand will be able to support the following range of theatre activities:

- **Productions and presentations** of New Zealand theatre work, including support for the production or presentation by New Zealand performers of New Zealand and overseas works, and presentation of new New Zealand works
 - *This will contribute to our Strategic Outcome 2: High-quality New Zealand art is developed, and SO 3: New Zealanders experience high-quality arts.*

- **Outreach and participation activities** that offer New Zealanders opportunities to participate in New Zealand theatre
 - *This will contribute to SO 1: New Zealanders participate in the arts.*
- **Creative development** – support for the development of New Zealand work, including new work
 - *This will contribute to SO 2: High-quality New Zealand art is developed.*
- **Professional development** for New Zealand theatre practitioners
 - *This will contribute to SO 2: High-quality New Zealand art is developed.*
- **Development of audiences and markets** for New Zealand theatre domestically and internationally
 - *This will contribute to SO 3: New Zealanders experience high-quality arts, and SO 4: New Zealand arts gain international success.*
- **Reviews, research and discussion** – including support for the writing of reviews, publishing projects, artform research, and participation in large-scale forums and conferences on theatre
 - *This will contribute to SO 2: High-quality New Zealand art is developed.*
- **Touring of New Zealand work**, both domestically and internationally
 - *This will contribute to SO 3: New Zealanders experience high-quality arts, and SO 4: New Zealand arts gain international success.*

Support through the Toi Tōtara Haemata programme 2016 – 2020

Over the next five years our Tōtara programme funding will support a professional theatre infrastructure that provides for:

- a theatre company producing a continuous programme in each of our three main population centres (Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington)
- the production and distribution of theatre works by Māori, for Aotearoa and the world
- the production and distribution of theatre works for young New Zealanders up to age 18
- the development of work by a wide range of theatre practitioners, including emerging practitioners, and opportunities for presenting new, innovative New Zealand theatre
- high-quality creative development services and the promotion of discussion and debate about contemporary theatre practice.

Creative New Zealand will specify the range of activities we expect of an organisation filling a theatre key role. The emphasis will be on increasing audiences and encouraging collaboration between theatre organisations, theatre practitioners and broader arts organisations.

New theatre funding priorities to 2020

Kahikatea priorities

Creative New Zealand's funding priorities for theatre for the Toi Uru Kahikatea investment programme will be:

- *High-quality work that engages with new and/or diverse audiences*

- *High-quality projects that involve collaboration and resource-sharing between arts organisations and groups.*

Arts Grant/Quick Response priorities

Our funding priorities for theatre for Arts Grants and the Quick Response programme will be:

- *High-quality work that engages with new and/or diverse audiences*
- *High-quality projects of scale that have confirmed contributions by multiple funding partners.*

Cross-artform priorities

Creative New Zealand's two general priorities that apply across artforms will also continue to apply to theatre. These are:

- *Projects or programmes of activity by, with or for young people*
- *Projects or programmes of activity that involve the innovative and cost-effective use of digital technologies to create high-quality New Zealand work and/or engage and interact with audiences.*

The review process

The focus group

This review included an external focus group consisting of 28 theatre artists and practitioners from across the country. The group met in April 2015. We asked them:

- to identify current key issues for New Zealand theatre, and
- to tell us their views on how Creative New Zealand can best support the creation, production,

presentation and distribution of high-quality New Zealand theatre over the next five years (2016 – 2020).

The Discussion Paper

On the basis of the feedback from the focus group and our own research and analysis, we distributed a *Review of Theatre Discussion Paper* in June. The Discussion Paper included a summary of the focus group's discussions, as well as an overview of the support that Creative New Zealand provides to the theatre sector.

The Paper asked a number of questions and offered some options for change. As well as providing their answers to the questionnaire, people were also invited to comment on any areas of concern not raised in the Paper. People were able to provide their responses either online or by email or letter.

Feedback for the review

During this review Creative New Zealand received feedback from 172 people and/or organisations. This included:

- the 28 members of the focus group
- 127 respondents to the online questionnaire
- 17 written submissions, most by email or letter.

Of the online respondents and those who made written submissions, 46 said they were responding on behalf of an organisation or group.

A summary of the feedback received from the sector is provided as an Appendix to this Final Report (at page 25).

Our analysis and recommendations

Creative New Zealand staff presented the Arts Council with an analysis and summary of the feedback we received in response to the Discussion Paper, and the Council considered this when it met in August 2015. Our staff then developed recommendations for the Council to consider at its October 2015 meeting. Section 2 of this Final Report (from page 7) sets out the results of the Council's final decisions.

Next steps

In March 2016 Creative New Zealand will publish a request for proposals from organisations interested in filling theatre key roles under the Toi Tōtara Haemata programme. Funding agreements for Toi Tōtara Haemata key roles will begin from January 2017.

Our new theatre funding priorities will apply to funding applications considered after 1 July 2016.

2. Our findings and decisions

In this section we set out:

- a summary of the information and statistics we gathered for this review about our support for the theatre sector since 2011
- our findings from consulting with the theatre sector for this review
- what the shape of our support for theatre will be for the next five years.

Creative New Zealand support for theatre over the last four years

A shift in our support

Over the last decade Creative New Zealand has shifted significantly our approach to supporting theatre, by:

- allocating longer-term funding to a wider range of theatre companies than previously, with an increase in the number of theatre organisations receiving this funding, from 10 in 2008 to 18 in 2015
- establishing distinct pathways for supporting domestic and international market development and for capability-building.

At the same time we have maintained support for time-bound projects through Arts Grants and Quick Response funding, as well as support for local communities to engage in theatre activities through the Creative Communities Scheme.

The range of theatre activities we have supported

Our analysis of funding trends over the last four years shows that we have supported a wide range of theatre activity:

- In each of the last four years Creative New Zealand has supported the presentation of more than 425 theatre productions.
- On average we support the touring of 21 theatre works within New Zealand each year¹.
- 164 (or 68%) of Arts Grants and Quick Response grants were for projects in Auckland or Wellington.
- Arts Grants and the Quick Response programme supported 46% of the 165 creative-development projects identified.
- Most of our support for audience and market development in the theatre sector is delivered through our capability-building and international initiatives.

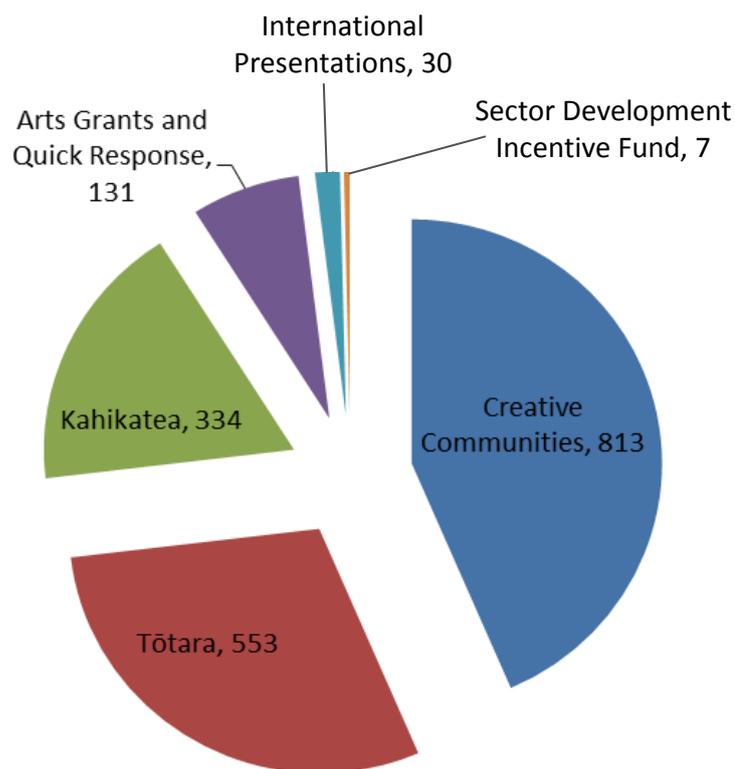
¹ On average each year, 11 of these tours were by an investment programme organisation, 6 of the tours were supported by an Arts Grant or Quick Response grant, and 4 of the tours were organised by Arts on Tour New Zealand.

- Of the 71 theatre-related opportunities supported by our international initiatives, 35 were offered to groups or individuals that usually receive support through the Arts Grant programme.

The feedback we received indicated there may be a lack of awareness within the theatre sector about the range of theatre activities delivered by our investment programme organisations or supported through the Creative Communities Scheme.

Support for theatre productions and presentations: Breakdown by funding programme

Over the last four years we supported a total of 1,868 theatre productions or presentations. This pie graph shows the proportion of that total supported by each of our various funding and support pathways.



Our infrastructure support in relation to other funders

The Discussion Paper for this review noted that:

‘Within the theatre sector there is a range of support offered by the public and private sector. Local government, the tertiary education sector and community trusts all play a role in maintaining the infrastructure that supports New Zealand theatre.’

Creative New Zealand is a major funder of theatre infrastructure, playing a larger role in providing infrastructure support for theatre than we do for some other artforms.

Within the performing arts (theatre, dance and music), local authorities and community trusts often contribute to building and maintaining performing arts venues. However, the infrastructure supporting the creation, presentation and distribution of performing arts works regularly involves some form of contribution from Creative New Zealand.

Support for a diverse range of theatre

Our analysis indicates that Creative New Zealand supports a diverse range of theatre forms, activities and groups. This includes:

- theatre presented outside the three main centres
- smaller independent companies
- diverse theatre forms such as devised, community and site-specific theatre, and
- theatre that engages with diverse communities.

A diverse range of theatre forms are now supported through longer-term funding. Of the new organisations funded through the investment programmes, Red Leap, Indian Ink, Massive and The Conch frequently use

devising processes. BATS and The Basement also present devised work.

Creative New Zealand also supports touring outside the three main centres and the presentation of New Zealand theatre work at multidisciplinary arts festivals.

Responding to specific situations and needs

Creative New Zealand has also targeted funds to strengthen New Zealand’s arts infrastructure, including its theatre infrastructure, in response to particular situations and needs – for example:

- Earthquake Recovery Grants
- Creative Giving – Matched Funding Grants, to provide incentives for private giving to the arts
- the Producer Pilot Programme, to develop theatre and dance producers.

Infrastructure support for touring

The Arts Council has also recently set aside \$1.92 million for 2014 – 2017 to support a New Zealand Touring Agency and Touring Fund. This is in addition to funds that may be available through our funding programmes to support domestic touring of New Zealand theatre work.

Toi Tōtara Haemata programme 2016 – 2020

Our funding formulae guidelines

Our requirement that Tōtara organisations obtain significant revenue from sources other than Creative New Zealand is a key element of the Tōtara programme.

We also have expectations about the proportion of an organisation's revenue that should be contributed by other public funders such as local government.

Our 'funding formulae guidelines' identify the likely level of Creative New Zealand's contribution as a proportion of the organisation's total revenue, expressed as a percentage range. There is a specific guideline for each Tōtara key role.

As part of any request for proposals that we issue in 2016 to fill available Tōtara key roles, Creative New Zealand will make it clear that the eligibility criteria will be strictly applied and that a key decision-making factor will always be the amount of funding that Creative New Zealand has available.

Tōtara programme key roles for theatre

'Main centre' key role

A theatre organisation filling a 'Main centre' key role will be expected to deliver all the following activities as part of an annual programme:

- a continuous programme of consistently high-quality theatre productions for audiences in Auckland, Christchurch or Wellington
- programmes and events that increase audiences and public appreciation for New Zealand theatre
- investment in the creation and presentation of Māori and Pasifika theatre works
- outreach programmes, including workshops, forums and activities that connect with a diverse range of communities and audiences
- providing the resources needed to realise consistently high production values (for example through the resourcing of design, stage

management, lighting, sound, costumes, prop-making, and set construction)

- the development and presentation of a regular programme of new New Zealand theatre work
- opportunities for creative and professional development for New Zealand theatre practitioners, both emerging and established
- collaborations with a range of New Zealand theatre organisations and practitioners and broader arts organisations.

The range of activities we expect is consistent with international standards for professional theatre production and is complemented by outreach activities for local communities.

Funding guidelines for 'Main centre' key role

- *For a theatre in a large population centre of more than 1 million:*
Creative New Zealand may contribute between 15% and 20% of the total revenue of the company.
- *For a theatre in a medium-size population centre (between 420,000 and 1 million):*
Creative New Zealand may contribute between 17% and 23% of the total revenue of the company.

The percentage range for our contribution under those guidelines is among the lowest for any Tōtara key role that has an identified funding contribution range. This is because we expect that main centre theatres will continue to receive revenue from a range of stakeholders as well as box-office revenue.

'Māori theatre' key role

Any organisation filling the 'Māori theatre' key role will be expected to deliver all of the following as part of an annual programme:

- the creation and presentation of high-quality Māori theatre for targeted audiences
- programmes and events that increase audiences and public appreciation for New Zealand theatre
- collaborations with a range of Māori theatre organisations and practitioners to develop and present work
- collaborations with partners who can increase the distribution of high-quality Māori theatre work
- providing the resources needed to realise consistently high production values (for example through the resourcing of design, stage management, lighting, sound, costumes, prop-making, and set construction)
- maintaining and developing networks and links with a range of iwi, hapū and Māori organisations throughout New Zealand
- programmes and activities where Mātauranga Māori will be evident.

Funding guideline for 'Māori theatre' key role

- Creative New Zealand may contribute between 48% and 56% of the total revenue of the company.

'Theatre for young people' key role

We have revised the existing 'Theatre for children' key role, and renamed it 'Theatre for young people', in order to:

- align the role with Creative New Zealand's policy for arts activity by, with or for young people up to age 18
- put more emphasis on collaborating with other Tōtara organisations through co-productions, as well as with a range of Kahikatea and smaller

independent companies that are creating and presenting high-quality theatre by, with and for young people.

Any organisation filling the 'Theatre for young people' key role will be expected to deliver all of the following as part of an annual programme:

- the creation of high-quality New Zealand theatre for New Zealand young people up to age 18
- at least two national tours of New Zealand work
- programmes and events that increase audiences and public appreciation for New Zealand theatre
- collaborations with a range of New Zealand theatre organisations and practitioners, resulting in the creation and/or presentation of New Zealand theatre targeted at New Zealand young people.

Funding guideline for 'Theatre for young people' key role

The guideline for the old 'Theatre for children' key role will apply to the revised 'Theatre for young people' role. This is:

- Creative New Zealand may contribute between 30% to 35% of the total revenue of the company.

A new 'Theatre development' key role

A current theatre key role is for: **The creation and presentation of experimental and excellent work by young and emerging New Zealand theatre practitioners** ('Experimental work by young/emerging artists' role). However, the feedback we received noted that that current role conflates three different elements – young people's theatre, experimental theatre, and opportunities for emerging artists.

We have therefore revised that role to focus on:

- **The development of New Zealand theatre, including new, innovative theatre and work by emerging practitioners.**

This 'Theatre development' key role will also have the effect of supporting the creative and professional development of theatre practitioners.

Any organisation filling the 'Theatre development' key role will, as part of their annual programme, be expected to present:

- a regular programme of New Zealand theatre
- new, innovative work by New Zealand theatre practitioners
- work by emerging theatre practitioners, including work by emerging Māori and Pasifika practitioners and practitioners from New Zealand's diverse cultures
- work that supports the creative and professional development of New Zealand theatre practitioners
- work that increases audiences and public appreciation for New Zealand theatre.

The range of activities required is different from those expected from a 'Main centre' theatre, with the 'Theatre development' role putting less emphasis on production values and outreach and participation activities. We will expect an organisation undertaking the 'Theatre development' role to:

- present diverse forms of theatre such as devised and physical theatre work, improvisation theatre, and stand-up comedy, and
- help theatre organisations and practitioners whose work may be only rarely presented or produced by other Tōtara theatre organisations.

What does 'innovative' mean?

'Innovative' theatre practitioners understand the skills and techniques required for high-quality theatre, but do not rely on established ideas, forms or ways of working. They are actively investigating new ways of working and are taking artistic risks.

Innovation also depends on context – that is, when and where the project is to happen. The innovation may be in the form of the work, the process of creating the work, the way the work is presented, the way the work engages with its audience, or the way in which skills and techniques are passed on.

Risk-share model for theatre development

In New Zealand and elsewhere, theatre development companies have often been relatively low-cost organisations operating on a risk-share basis. Risk-sharing means that wages or fees might not be paid to the artists and practitioners associated with a production. The venues generally take a share of the box office revenue, while the financial risks (and rewards) associated with the production are largely taken by the members of the presenting group. Under this model the often low returns to practitioners are offset by the opportunity to present and market work in a well-managed venue.

Funding guideline for 'Theatre development' key role

The guideline for the old 'Experimental work by young/emerging artists' key role will apply to the 'Theatre development' role. This is:

- Creative New Zealand may contribute between 36% to 44% of the total revenue of the company.

A new 'Creative development services' key role

In response to concerns raised in the feedback we received, we have explicitly identified a key role of:

- **Supporting the creative development of high-quality New Zealand theatre and also facilitating and supporting the development of theatre as an artform.**

At the focus group and in a number of responses to the Discussion Paper questionnaire, concerns were raised about the standard of New Zealand theatre work. Some people were also concerned about the limited audience appeal of some New Zealand theatre works, particularly work being developed by some newer Kahikatea companies and work supported through Arts Grants.

There was also discussion about ways to support devised theatre and other forms of theatre that do not take as their starting point a script written by a playwright, as well as ways to increase and promote discussions within the theatre sector about contemporary New Zealand theatre practice and the development of the theatre artform.

Playmarket is currently funded through the Tōtara programme for the role it plays in developing and distributing New Zealand work. However, Creative New Zealand has not specifically described the activities we fund for the role. We need to be clearer about our intentions and about the kinds of theatre activities we will require and support. We have therefore explicitly identified and described the new 'Creative development services' role.

Activities to be delivered for the 'Creative development services' role

Any organisation filling this new 'Creative development services' key role will be expected to deliver all the following as part of an annual programme:

- high-quality script advisory services that support the creative development of all forms of contemporary theatre, including devised and physical theatre and music/theatre
- developing and distributing best-practice resources related to the creative development of contemporary theatre
- promotion, distribution and agency services for playwrights and other theatre makers
- facilitation and support for critical discussion and debate about contemporary New Zealand theatre practice – for example, regional and national forums and symposiums and the publication of critical writing
- publishing and distributing high-quality New Zealand theatre work in print and/or digital formats.

The publication and distribution of theatre work in print or digital formats will enable New Zealand work to be promoted to, and accessed by, readers and audiences, both domestically and internationally.

The level of our funding for this key role

Guidelines for service organisations in other areas (for example, dance, music and Pacific arts) state that Creative New Zealand will usually contribute towards the organisation's infrastructure costs, as well as towards the costs of providing identified services.

As for all organisations funded through the Toi Tōtara Haemata programme, we expect that a service organisation will receive financial and in-kind support from a range of supporters other than Creative New Zealand. We also expect that they will earn revenue through providing the relevant services.

The level of funding we will provide for the 'Creative development services' role will depend on the costs of

the subsidised services that Creative New Zealand wants to be provided for the arts sector.

Our targeted funding: International initiatives and capability-building

International initiatives

Creative New Zealand expects its international initiatives to continue to focus on:

- the developing of markets
- presenting high-quality New Zealand work internationally
- creative development of work through co-commissioning and international exchange.

From 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2015 we offered 71 opportunities to 33 theatre organisations, groups and individuals through our international initiatives. These opportunities consisted of:

- **34 market-development activities** – these were focused on supporting New Zealand delegates to attend and/or present at an international market such as the Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM) and the Performing Arts Market Seoul (PAMS)
- **30 presentations of New Zealand work overseas** – these international presentations of New Zealand theatre works were supported through the International Presentation Fund, Touring Australia and NZ@Edinburgh 2014
- **7 creative-development projects** – for example the WW100 programme, a co-commissioning fund, the Focus on Asia Strategy and Indigenous Exchange initiatives.

Of those 71 opportunities:

- 35 were offered to groups or individuals usually supported through Arts Grants or Quick Response funding
- 15 were for organisations usually supported through the Toi Uru Kahikatea investment programme
- 14 were for Toi Tōtara Haemata organisations
- 6 were for organisations being supported through a Creative New Zealand pilot programme
- 1 was for an individual who had not previously received direct funding from us.

Capability-building

We intend that our capability-building initiatives will continue to focus on supporting:

- organisations to develop their audiences and markets
- organisations to strengthen their governance and strategic focus, and
- arts sector conferences and forums.

In any given financial year our capability-building initiatives may also select areas of specific focus – for example, developing digital strategies and diversifying sources of income.

During the four financial years to 30 June 2015, 21 theatre organisations participated in our capability-building initiatives. Of the 14 different opportunities available:

- 6 were focused on audience and market development (16 theatre organisations participated)

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- 5 were focused on strengthening each organisation's governance or strategic focus or direction (18 theatre organisations participated)
 - 3 were arts sector conferences (18 theatre organisations participated).

Audience development remains a particular concern for the theatre sector. We expect that our capability-building initiatives will continue to develop resources and offer opportunities that enable theatre organisations to increase and diversify their audiences.

3. Issues raised during the review

Strengthening audience demand

The level of audience demand for New Zealand theatre was one of the focus group's particular concerns. Several respondents to the Discussion Paper questionnaire were also concerned about limited audiences and the limited audience appeal of some work being presented.

As we noted in the Discussion Paper, overall theatre audience numbers were strong in 2014. Paid attendances reported by theatre investment programme

organisations for the 2014 calendar year totalled 356,357.

Some companies have high levels of audience support – for example, The Court Theatre reports that its 2014 audience attendances were its highest ever. However, the table below shows there is room to improve paid audience numbers for some organisations.

Category	Total paid attendances (2014)
'Main centre' key role organisations (ATC, Court, Circa)	220,000
Other Tōtara theatre key role organisations (BATS, Centrepoint, Massive, National Theatre for Children, Taki Rua)	66,000
Four largest Kahikatea organisations (Fortune, Silo, Indian Ink, Basement)	62,746
Other Kahikatea (Red Leap, Tawata, Conch, Young & Hungry)	7,611

By increasing their paid audience numbers, theatre organisations can help increase the income of the theatre practitioners, as well as making the organisations more financially sustainable.

How we will help strengthen audience demand

Over the next five years Creative New Zealand will work with the theatre sector to strengthen audience demand for New Zealand theatre.

We will require organisations for the 'Main centre', 'Māori theatre', 'Theatre development' and 'Theatre for young people' key roles to:

- *Increase audiences and public appreciation for New Zealand theatre.*

We will also retain the following as a theatre funding priority for the Kahikatea, Arts Grant and Quick Response programmes:

- *High-quality work that engages with new and/or diverse audiences.*

We also expect that our capability-building and international initiatives will continue to offer targeted support towards audience and market development, both domestically and internationally.

Investment in Māori and Pasifika theatre

The review saw considerable discussion around the quality and quantity of Māori and Pasifika theatre work being produced and presented by organisations in a 'Main centre' key role.

Māori and Pasifika theatre by main centre theatres: What was presented and how

Our analysis of Māori and Pasifika theatre work presented by main centre theatres over the last four years identified 15 works.

Those works were either:

- produced by a main centre theatre, or
- produced by a Māori or Pasifika company or multidisciplinary arts festival in collaboration with a main centre theatre (eight of the 15 productions were collaborations).

Two of the 15 identified works received some funding from our Sector Development Incentive Fund.

Need for more investment by main centre theatres into Māori and Pasifika theatre

The 15 works made up only 6% of the 234 identified productions by main centre theatres over the last four years. We recognise that many factors and constraints influence the programming choices of main centre theatres – nevertheless that percentage figure seems low.

This indicates that Creative New Zealand should require the 'Main centre' theatre organisations to invest more heavily into creating and presenting Māori and Pasifika theatre. This could include not only financial investment, but also through providing venues, rehearsal spaces, production resources and materials, marketing and promotion support, and/or practitioner expertise.

Organisations filling a 'Main centre' theatre key role will need to discuss with Māori and Pasifika theatre organisations and practitioners about how to implement and resource this requirement for greater investment. There need to be discussions within the theatre sector about the benefits of different kinds and levels of investment and about how to develop quality work. Creative New Zealand can help facilitate these discussions.

Collaboration across the theatre sector

Many respondents saw a need for more collaborative approaches across the theatre sector. They thought Creative New Zealand should offer incentives for our investment programme organisations to collaborate with one another and/or to respond to the needs of smaller companies, who are usually funded only through individual project grants.

With the current constraints on our budget it would be difficult for Creative New Zealand to offer specific incentives for collaboration. However, we agree that there is a strong need for theatre organisations, groups and practitioners to collaborate, and we will make a number of adjustments to our funding programme requirements to help achieve this, as explained below.

Key infrastructure roles: Collaboration as part of role descriptions

Our descriptions for the 'Main centre', 'Māori theatre' and 'Theatre for young people' key roles will specify that we expect each organisation to collaborate with a range of theatre organisations and practitioners and broader arts organisations (see from page 10 of this report). This includes collaborations with:

- companies supported through the Kahikatea programme
- multidisciplinary arts festivals, and
- theatre groups and practitioners who operate without investment programme support.

Kahikatea programme: Collaboration as funding priority

Our review also concluded that Creative New Zealand can signal its interest in supporting well-developed collaborations through introducing an additional theatre funding priority for the Kahikatea programme:

- *High-quality projects that involve collaboration and resource-sharing between arts organisations and groups.*

A collaboration may involve:

- collaborating in the development or presentation of a work
- a sharing of services or resources, or
- coaching and mentoring to help with the professional development of individual theatre practitioners.

Arts Grants/Quick Response: Collaboration as funding priority

We will introduce an additional theatre funding priority for Arts Grants and the Quick Response programme:

- *High-quality projects of scale that have confirmed contributions by multiple funding partners.*

A funding partner can include: a multidisciplinary arts festival; a regional art gallery or museum; a community

or philanthropic trust; or an existing Tōtara or Kahikatea organisation.

Any partner will need to provide, as part of the Arts Grant or Quick Response application, written confirmation of the specific resources they are prepared to commit to the project. These might be: financial resources; a rehearsal or performance space; practitioner expertise; production support; or shared services such as business-management, marketing or promotional services.

Development of international markets

Suggestions for broadening the scope of our International Presentation Fund

The questionnaire asked about the effectiveness of Creative New Zealand's current initiatives for developing international markets (Question 9A). This drew suggestions that our International Presentation Fund should no longer include as eligibility requirements that an invitation to present overseas can be considered under this Fund only if:

- the invitation is received as a result of one of Creative New Zealand's international initiatives, and
- the invitation is received within 18 months after that particular initiative.

Creative New Zealand support for theatre groups presenting overseas is available through several different pathways. In addition to our international initiatives, Arts Grants and the Quick Response programme can consider theatre projects where there are invitations to present overseas. The Kahikatea programme has also supported some companies to present overseas (the Indian Ink Theatre Company for example).

Current constraints on Creative New Zealand budgets will require us to reduce the funds available to support our international initiatives in 2015/16 and 2016/17. In this context it is not appropriate to extend the qualification period or range of companies that can be supported by the International Presentation Fund.

Where to focus our international initiatives

We received comments both for and against selecting particular markets, including festivals, as Creative New Zealand's focus for international activity. Suggestions of areas where more resources could be directed included indigenous links, and co-productions between New Zealand and overseas theatre companies.

Initiatives for promoting indigenous links are now underway through the international exchange programmes. The Focus on Asia Strategy is also providing co-production opportunities for all the performing arts.

Some international initiatives are scheduled to be reviewed over the next 18 months – for example, Touring Australia and Te Manu Ka Tau (Flying Friends). Those reviews will also consider the feedback on those initiatives that we received through this theatre review.

Tōtara key roles: Number of organisations for each role

Limiting 'Main centre' theatres to Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington

Our current description for the 'Main centre' theatre key role allows for support to be available for at least three theatre companies to create and present high-quality

New Zealand theatre: one in each of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington.

In future, Creative New Zealand will include a three-city limit for the 'Main centre' role, with support available for three theatre companies to create and present high-quality New Zealand theatre – one in each of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington.

Our reasoning is that the size and scope of these operations require a sufficiently high population base, as well as the existence of other funders and stakeholders. Having this role for theatre in the country's three main population centres is an essential component for a professional theatre infrastructure that:

- supports a range of high-quality theatrical activities that can be reasonably accessed by just over 50% of New Zealanders
- enables the creative development of work and the professional development of practitioners
- supports the development of work that can be toured to centres outside Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington.

Other theatre key roles: No limit on the number of organisations

There have not been specific limitations around the number of companies that can be supported for the existing key roles of:

- **Theatre for children** – Creating and distributing high-quality New Zealand theatre for New Zealand children
- **Māori theatre** – Creating, presenting and distributing high-quality New Zealand theatre by Māori, for Aotearoa and the world

- **Experimental work by young/emerging artists** – Creating and presenting experimental and excellent work by young and emerging New Zealand theatre practitioners.

We will not be including any limits on the number of organisations able to fill the following new or revised Tōtara key roles that have emerged from this review – that is, 'Māori theatre', 'Theatre for young people', 'Theatre development', and 'Creative development services'.

However, organisations filling any theatre key role will of course have to meet the eligibility criteria for the Tōtara programme – namely, that the organisation is a financially sound and well-run arts organisation that can:

- provide leadership within the arts sector and collaborate with other arts organisations
- deliver specified benefits to the arts and to audiences or participants
- achieve the highest possible standards with careful use of resources, and
- obtain income from sources other than Creative New Zealand.

The amount of funding that Creative New Zealand has available to distribute is an important decision-making factor for us, and there are limits to how much we can contribute to a Tōtara organisation filling a given key role. These limits are expressed in our funding formulae guidelines (see page 9 of this report).

A 'Main centre' theatre in Wellington

We acknowledge that there is not universal agreement in the theatre sector that the 'Main centre' key role best serves the model of theatre-making preferred by

younger and mid-career theatre practitioners in Wellington.

Several respondents questioned how effectively the range of activities expected of an organisation filling the 'Main centre' role was being delivered in Wellington. A number of respondents argued that there should not be a 'Main centre' key role in Wellington and that the money currently allocated to this role might be better used to support a wider range of Wellington-based theatre groups. Similar views were expressed when we consulted in 2013 about a key Tōtara role for theatre in Wellington.

However, Creative New Zealand believes that having a theatre based in our third largest population centre that successfully delivers all the activities required by the 'Main centre' role is essential for New Zealand's theatre infrastructure – locally, regionally and nationally. We will therefore not be withdrawing the key role for a 'Main centre' theatre in Wellington.

Arts Grants

Concerns were raised during the review about how difficult it is for established theatre practitioners to make a living and be able to realise a new and innovative work through all its stages. For some artists the support available through Arts Grants is not enough to take a work from the initial concept to presentation.

Companies and groups supported through short-term Arts Grants can also find it difficult to develop their infrastructure and momentum through the Arts Grants programme. At the same time, the eligibility criteria for our Kahikatea investment programme can make it difficult to gain the longer-term support available through that programme. Not all theatre groups and companies that want to undertake a project of scale will want to spend time and energy establishing the management and governance structures required for entry to the Kahikatea programme.

This issue has emerged for other artforms as well, and the solutions proposed have been to provide for Arts Grants for a longer period or to earmark funds for a special opportunity that meets an identified need for that particular artform. The possibility of developing a special opportunity for theatre was raised as part of this review.

However, current restrictions on our budget make it unlikely that we will be able to allocate additional funds to support a theatre special opportunity. To do this we would need to reduce the funding available through existing programmes such as Arts Grants or Quick Response. We think this is not desirable and therefore we did not recommend a special opportunity for theatre as an outcome of this review.

4. Our support for theatre to 2020: Details of programmes and criteria

The table below sets out how Creative New Zealand’s funding programmes will support New Zealand theatre from 2016 to 2020.

Each application is assessed against the specific criteria of the funding programme to which the application is made.

Funding programme / Types of theatre activities supported	Description / Who can apply / The criteria	Funding details
<p>Creative Communities Scheme</p> <p>Activities supported can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the development, production and presentation of work ▪ opportunities for New Zealanders to participate in the arts ▪ community arts projects. 	<p>For communities to undertake local arts activities.</p> <p>There are three funding criteria, relating to: broad community involvement; diversity; and young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administered by city and district councils ▪ Short-term projects ▪ Up to four funding rounds a year.
<p>Quick Response grants and Arts Grants</p> <p>Activities supported can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ creative development of New Zealand work ▪ the production and presentation of work ▪ opportunities for New Zealanders to participate in the arts ▪ community arts projects ▪ professional development of practitioners ▪ artform development and discussion/debate – including the writing of reviews, publishing projects, artform research, and participation in large-scale sector forums ▪ the touring of New Zealand work domestically and internationally ▪ festivals. 	<p>For individuals, practitioners, groups, and organisations to undertake projects in less than a year, with priority given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ high-quality work that engages with new and/or diverse audiences ▪ high-quality projects of scale that have confirmed contributions by multiple funding partners ▪ projects or programmes of activity by, with or for young people ▪ projects or programmes of activity that involve the innovative and cost-effective use of digital technologies to create high-quality New Zealand work and/or engage and interact with audiences. 	<p>Quick Response grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ up to \$7,500 per grant ▪ three funding rounds a year. <p>Publishing subsidy rates apply.</p> <p>Arts Grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ usually a maximum of \$65,000 per grant ▪ two funding rounds a year. <p>Publishing subsidy rates apply.</p> <p>In exceptional cases Arts Grant applications for more than \$65,000 may be considered.</p>

Funding programme / Types of theatre activities supported	Description / Who can apply / The criteria	Funding details
<p>Toi Uru Kahikatea (Arts Development) investment programme:</p> <p>Activities supported can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ creative development of New Zealand work ▪ the production and presentation of work ▪ opportunities for New Zealanders to participate in the arts ▪ community arts projects ▪ professional development of practitioners ▪ artform development and discussion/debate – including the writing of reviews, publishing projects, artform research and participation in large-scale sector forums ▪ the touring of New Zealand work domestically and internationally ▪ festivals. 	<p>For established groups and organisations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop the skills, resources and networks required to create, present, promote, distribute or participate in high-quality arts or arts experiences ▪ research, create, present, distribute and/or tour programmes of high-quality New Zealand work or art within New Zealand or overseas ▪ develop and/or maintain the infrastructure required to create, present, distribute or participate in high-quality New Zealand arts or arts experiences. <p>Priority is given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ high-quality work that engages with new and/or diverse audiences ▪ high-quality projects that involve collaboration and resource-sharing between arts organisations and groups ▪ projects or programmes of activity by, with or for young people ▪ projects or programmes of activity that involve the innovative and cost-effective use of digital technologies to create high-quality New Zealand work and/or engage and interact with audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No set request limits – investments range from \$45,000 to \$500,000 per year ▪ Funding from one to three years ▪ Applications accepted once a year ▪ Publishing subsidy rates apply.

Funding programme / Types of theatre activities supported	Programme criteria and theatre key roles	Funding details
<p>Toi Tōtara Haemata (Arts Leadership) investment programme</p> <p>For details of activities required for each key role, see Section 2, 'Our findings and decisions' (page 7)</p>	<p>For financially sound and well-run arts organisations that can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide leadership within the arts sector and collaborate with other arts organisations ▪ deliver specified benefits to the arts and to audiences or participants ▪ achieve the highest possible standards with careful use of resources ▪ receive income from sources other than Creative New Zealand. <p>Theatre key roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main centre theatre – support is available for three theatre companies to create and present high-quality New Zealand theatre: one in each of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. ▪ Māori theatre ▪ Theatre for young people ▪ Theatre development ▪ Creative development services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding agreement for between two and five years ▪ Funding formulae guidelines apply.

Appendix: Summary of feedback

We received 144 submissions in response to the Discussion Paper we published in June. We received a range of frank, thoughtful and sometimes conflicting views about the state of New Zealand theatre today and its future.

Areas of strength for the theatre sector

The feedback we received identified the following areas of New Zealand theatre as working well:

- smaller, independent companies
- the use of social media as a promotional tool
- emerging practitioners
- the wide variety of places in which theatre is occurring, which are not limited to traditional black box/proscenium arch venues
- community theatre
- the consortium model of Musical Theatre New Zealand (MTNZ), in which groups in different cities jointly obtain performance rights and share set/costume construction costs to create a production that is then cast, directed and presented locally
- BATS, The Basement, Young and Hungry, and Playmarket – many respondents commented that these companies have been particularly successful
- opportunities for collaboration across the theatre sector.

There was recognition by some respondents that over the last few years Creative New Zealand has shifted our approach substantially by allocating longer-term funding to a wider range of theatre companies. One respondent summarised what was working well:

- *An ecosystem of multiple delivery models that ranges from strong, mature companies that can develop work and talent, producing work of excellence; to the support of emerging, individual artists, challenging approaches and models.*

Areas for improvement

A large number of respondents pointed to areas they thought were not working so well, and usually this was because they thought there were imbalances in the funding available. They saw a favouring of, for example:

- Auckland, over the South Island and over regional centres like Hamilton, Palmerston North and Dunedin
- the investment programmes, over the Creative Communities Scheme (CCS) and Arts Grants/Quick Response
- mainstream Pākehā/New Zealand European theatre, over Māori and Pasifika theatre
- theatre appealing to urban, middle-class, middle-aged Pākehā, over theatre that engages with and reflects more diverse communities, such as the Māori, Pasifika and Asian communities, disability groups, prisoners, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) communities
- traditional text-based work, over devised work and newer theatre forms
- support for work from overseas, over New Zealand work

- established artists and companies, over emerging artists and companies
- infrastructure and administrative/capability resources for our investment programme organisations, over infrastructure support and resources for smaller, independent companies.

For example:

- *There either needs to be a redistribution of resources back from Tōtara and Kahikatea to Arts and Quick Response Grants, or Kahikatea needs to be more accessible to more organisations (smaller amounts of recurrent funding with less onerous reporting).*
- *It's virtually impossible to move from BATS to national stage via the current independent infrastructure. One answer may be to support bigger organisations to commission, foster, develop and present the work of independent companies and artists who currently apply for project to project funding from Creative New Zealand.*
- *I can understand some of the independent sector's frustration that quite a traditional company structure is required to apply for this [investment programme] type of funding but I think realistically, the amount of money being invested requires proof of good and well-organised governance and the ability to manage these funds successfully.*
- *For many years Creative New Zealand has been targeting funding to support 'high-quality theatre' (which seems to be interpreted as professional theatre) and leaving grass roots theatre to their own devices. The 'Audience Development' mandate seems to have followed a similar model of funding professional theatre companies to present work, and deliver this to audiences that may not have otherwise seen it. Non-profit/community/volunteer theatre has not been identified as a potential solution to this field.*

There was a call for a new type of theatre company:

- *... what is sorely needed is a fulltime New Zealand Playwright's Theatre, dedicated to developing and producing new work, keeping the repertoire in production and partnering with theatres all over the country to produce plays that may well attract people who currently regard live theatre as irrelevant to them.*

Another respondent suggested varying the hours at which theatre shows are presented:

- *Sydney's Ensemble Theatre do two shows a week at 11am. Which I thought was silly. Until I saw the bookings. It means people can go to the theatre and then lunch and shop afterwards and still go home in the daylight. (Scoff one might, but for many people this is a big factor.)*

Major themes

Major feedback themes were around expectations and policy settings in the following areas:

- Theatre key roles and the Tōtara programme – the nature of the activities to be delivered by each role and limits on the number of organisations for a given role

For example:

- *I think there is a lack of understanding within the community as to what the key roles are. It's a kind of private secret between the Tōtara recipients and Creative New Zealand. I think that the current key roles – the various areas in which the organisations are meant to deliver – would be significantly more effective if there was greater communication about what these roles were and how various groups not currently aligned with the various Tōtara agencies might take advantage of them (meant in a positive sense).*

- Support for Māori and Pasifika theatre
- International market development, special opportunities and other Creative New Zealand initiatives.

Other themes that emerged included:

- audience numbers
- how to improve the quality of theatre work being developed, and
- maintaining and developing support for skilled theatre practitioners.

Theatre key roles and the Tōtara programme

Limitations on the number of organisations filling key roles

A clear majority of respondents were in favour of there being no limitations on the number of organisations filling a given Tōtara programme key role. People felt that the number of companies funded to fill a key role should not be decided on the basis of geography or population size, but rather on the basis of:

- artistic merit and effectiveness
- community need
- cultural knowledge and background.

A few respondents recognised that limits were necessary for the 'Main centre' role and that increasing the number of companies supported through the Tōtara programme would reduce the amount of funding available to independent companies, emerging artists and community groups. For example:

- *Any more than three will surely reduce the funding available for independent companies, artists, emerging practitioners and innovators, stifling vitality and fostering elitism within the theatre sector.*
- *Yes, only one organisation per key centre is needed. The higher the population base, the less Creative New Zealand funding percentage should be required, as there would be greater access to audiences and admission income therefrom.*

'Main centre' key role

Discussion of the 'Main centre' theatre key role often involved comments about the following issues:

- The scale and scope of the services, resources and artform leadership being provided to the theatre sector by existing main centre theatre organisations (ATC, Court and Circa). For example:
 - *The strength and glue of the model is the established, mature companies, well-run and governed being centres of excellence = Tōtara system works well.*
 - *... these Main Centre key roles need to develop meaningful and measurable shared outcomes with Creative New Zealand regarding their leadership and capability-building role across the sector in their city. This would mean working with a range of artists and other companies, including project funded artists and Tōtara/Kahikatea funded organisations, helping to develop the sector in their regions.*
- Whether the range of recognised main centres should be extended to include Dunedin, Palmerston North and/or Hamilton. For example:
 - *Dunedin and Palmerston North need to be recognised as major (theatre) centres in light of their existing community theatres' 40+ year*

history (in Dunedin's case 60 years if the Southern Comedy Players/Southern Theatre Trust are factored in). The Fortune should therefore be elevated to Tōtara status.

- Recognition of other diverse and growing populations i.e. Asian. Of note, there are no Waikato or Hamilton theatre organisations supported through the Tōtara programme.
- A need to 're-imagine' the current key role in Wellington and/or distribute funds available for this role to a wider range of Wellington-based organisations. For example:
 - In principle we support the 'main centre' key role, but have some concerns about the way it has been used in Wellington.... We feel that Wellington offers a different ecology to other centres. Within Wellington there are niche organisations such as Tawata, National Theatre for Children and Young and Hungry.... We believe the makeup of the key role for Wellington needs to be reviewed to better suit the existing ecology as the current model does not meet the needs of Wellington.
- The amount of New Zealand work being commissioned and presented by main centre theatres. For example:
 - I think the Main Centre role should focus clearly on New Zealand drama, which represents playwrights and theatre makers from all cultures that live here, with a strong emphasis on Māori drama.
- The forms of theatre being developed and presented and the potential audience numbers for those forms. For example:
 - The key Tōtara roles have a consistent lack of diversity in their programmes with regard to women and non-white characters and stories. These productions are very often male-

dominated, white American and British works or Shakespeares and are rarely contemporary, aimed at an older, wealthy, conservative audience. Māori or Pacific works are often off-site or played down and seem token, while Asian works are unheard of. These works stunt New Zealand theatre from finding its own narrative, voice and style, and do nothing to encourage people of colour in New Zealand that they will find work in this country on the main stage.

A main centre theatre noted that:

- ... the word 'consistently' in 'consistently high quality' risks implying that every show must be high quality – this could encourage Tōtara companies to play it safe (always reverting to existing procedures) rather than taking artistic risks.

'Māori theatre' key role

There was near unanimous support for continuing the 'Māori theatre' role, but some respondents raised concerns around the capacity to fill this role and to deliver nationally.

Māori ownership and control of the organisation and the work was seen as being of paramount importance, regardless of what company or companies were filling the role.

Respondents thought Creative New Zealand should consider whether the requirements for the role should include co-operation with a wide range of Māori theatre practitioners and groups, and providing for co-productions of work with other (Māori and non-Māori) theatre groups and organisations.

For example:

- The bottom line is that whatever number of organisations, they **must** have Māori at the helm.

- *Creative New Zealand should keep prioritising this form of work as it has an intrinsic value.... As main centre Tōtara organisations aren't engaging especially extensively with Māori work and practitioners, it is essential there is a Māori theatre key role. More importantly, it is essential there exists a company or companies which are governed and run by Māori practitioners employing mātauranga Māori in their work, to develop and present work that promotes and fosters the indigenous voice.*
- *The reality is that this must happen within limited funding and it is better to have strong, focussed, consolidated and collaborative channels rather than a scattergun approach.*

‘Experimental theatre by young/emerging artists’ key role

There was discussion about the focus of this role. Some people observed that the current role conflates three different requirements: young people’s theatre, experimental theatre, and opportunities for emerging artists. They thought that Creative New Zealand needs to be clearer about our intentions for this role. For example:

- *You need to redefine this horrific sounding role, but yes to what you're trying to say.*
- *There is a flaw in the terminology of this question that implies that experimental work and young/emerging artists are the same thing. This is not the case and takes a narrow-minded view of what it means to be experimental.*

‘Theatre for children’ key role

There was near unanimous endorsement of the importance of this role. The discussions around it focussed on revising the role for an organisation working in collaboration with other Tōtara organisations (for example through co-productions), as well as collaborating with the range of Kahikatea and smaller independent companies that are creating and presenting high-quality theatre by, with and for children. For example:

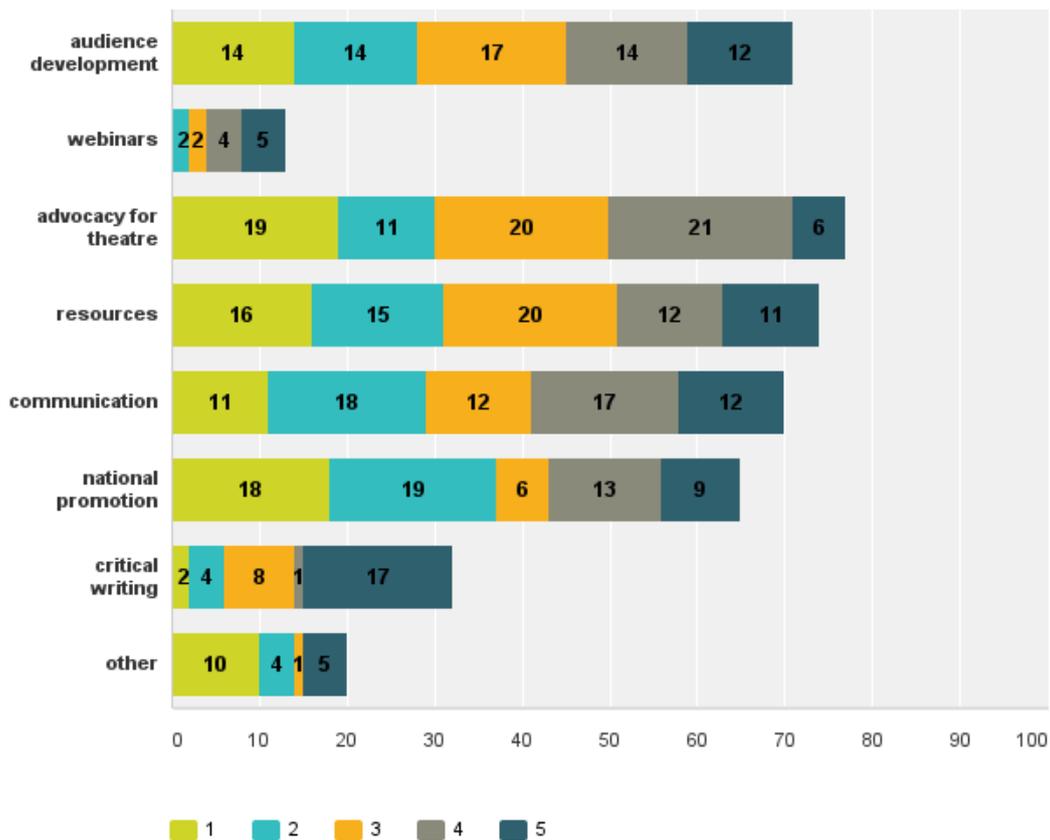
- *... could there be an area of further thinking as to how Tōtara organisations engage with our National Theatre for Children. Is there more room to support and ensure longevity of new productions produced by our National Children’s Theatre to move about our Tōtara organisations?*

Playmarket and other theatre services

The Discussion Paper questionnaire canvassed support for Playmarket’s key role as a service organisation focussed on services for playwriting.

There was support for Playmarket’s role in its specialist area and discussion about its capacity to support devised and physical theatre work.

The questionnaire also identified eight potential theatre services and asked people to select the five services they thought would be most important to the theatre sector over the next five years. An ‘Other’ option was also included. Support for the eight potential services identified was spread as follows:



Numbers within the bars refer to the number of respondents who ranked that option as 1 (left side/lime colour = most important), through to 5 (right side/dark blue = least important).

Among the suggested ‘other’ activities identified by the respondents who gave more extended answers to this question were:

- a dedicated fund to support producers
- production services for independent companies
- shared services such as access to hot desks, production services, office equipment and other resources and assets
- information and resources related to suitable, affordable rehearsal rooms, to subsidised performance spaces, and/or a performing arts/theatre-makers hub
- a Māori theatre-makers whare – a purpose-built and specially equipped space with dedicated places for performances, rehearsals, offices and storage, alongside suitable rooms for people to gather, network and kōrero.

A minority of respondents felt that there was no pressing need for a theatre services organisation – for example:

- *Creative New Zealand should fund very few of these activities, instead there should be a call for proposals about how to create projects that will **meaningfully grow** and develop audiences, projects that work with communities, organisations, businesses, projects/groups that are committed to building relationship from the ground up, rather than top-down approaches that are suggested here.*
- *For the most part, New Zealand theatre artists are pretty good at doing a lot of this, and funding going directly to companies, producers, and artists will be better spent rather than paying third parties.*

Support for Māori and Pasifika theatre

Throughout their answers to the different questions in the Discussion Paper questionnaire, a number of respondents raised concerns about support for Māori and Pasifika theatre. Their concerns included:

- a lack of Māori and Pasifika control of Māori and Pasifika work
- a feeling that the requirement for ‘Main centre’ key role theatres to include Māori and Pasifika theatre has led to a tokenistic, tick-box approach by the theatres
- a perceived under-resourcing of Māori and Pasifika productions by main centre Tōtara theatres, compared to the resources and support they make available to their own productions
- the need for a Māori theatre whare in Wellington

- a lack of understanding by Creative New Zealand of the needs, wants and kawa of Māori theatre practitioners.

For example:

- *Giving money to the likes of ATC/Court etc to deliver Māori/Pasifika theatre when there are no Māori/Pasifika people who are part of that decision-making process is, frankly, a farce.*
- *Collaborations as they stand now ... collaboration means assimilation especially if it is a Māori independent company working with a Tōtara Organisation.*
- *Mana is placed on the Tōtara Organisations for providing less opportunities for the Māori community, and less or no Mana is given to Independent Organisations who have been maintaining a healthy and supportive environment for Māori practitioners to continue to practise and upskill.*

International market development, special opportunities and other initiatives

As well as feedback on our current investment programmes, the Discussion Paper sought feedback on:

- how effective our international market-development initiatives are for theatre
- which Creative New Zealand special opportunities might provide the most benefit for the development of New Zealand theatre: residencies in schools, open location residencies, fellowships, or internships
- initiatives and actions suggested by the focus group – namely, establishing a theatre services key role as

part of the Tōtara programme; extending the maximum period for completing an Arts Grant project; maintaining audience development as a Creative New Zealand funding priority for theatre; and ring-fencing funds for a special opportunity

- any other aspects of Creative New Zealand's support for theatre that a respondent wanted to comment on.

Importance of New Zealand's theatre infrastructure

The feedback we received emphasised the importance of Creative New Zealand supporting a theatre infrastructure that:

- facilitates and supports the diverse ways in which contemporary theatre can be made and presented
- collaborates with theatre artists and groups throughout New Zealand
- presents and supports the work of New Zealand theatre groups and practitioners who are not funded through the investment programmes
- actively supports the maintenance and development of the skills required to make high-quality New Zealand theatre.

International market development

The Discussion Paper questionnaire asked about the effectiveness of Creative New Zealand's current initiatives for developing international markets (Question 9A). This drew suggestions that our International Presentation Fund should no longer include as eligibility requirements that an invitation to present overseas can be considered under this Fund only if:

- the invitation is received as a result of one of Creative New Zealand's international initiatives, and

- the invitation is received within 18 months after that particular initiative.

There were also comments both for and against selecting particular markets, including festivals, as Creative New Zealand's focus for international activity.

Suggestions for areas where more resources could be directed included indigenous links and co-production between New Zealand and overseas theatre companies.

Other issues

A group of contemporary performing artists hosted a hui around the Discussion Paper and also discussed the review online. This group submitted the following statement:

- *We would like to see more of a sliding scale of support – one where organisations are encouraged to move off the scale rather than large trees who enjoy the funding light for decades.*
- *We need to prioritise resource-sharing in this climate – this is beneficial for all. We would encourage more transparency and resource-sharing from the Kahikatea and Tōtara companies.*
- *There's a lack of professional development and capability funding for emerging & established artists into creating careers that are sustainable. We see a huge leap from organisations & artists who are project-funded to those that are Kahikatea and Tōtara clients.*
- *We would like to see more engagement with New Zealand artists who are actively creating their own networks and opportunities beyond Creative New Zealand initiatives. If an artist has independently secured their own international opportunity, this should not be penalised because it hasn't come*

through a Creative New Zealand-initiated opportunity.

- *Arts need to reach outside of the 'arts sector'. There is currently little support for work which focuses on community participation and social engagement. This is a rapidly growing sector and needs focussed resource beyond the successful Creative Communities Scheme.*
- *We are interested in the concept of investment rather than support. Arts funding is not about creating welfare dependence but empowering a healthy and sustainability professional community through up-skilling and tailored capability development.*

Other respondents were highly critical of the overall health and quality of theatre in New Zealand. For example:

- *Our cultural institutions create politically benign work with high-production values and screes of evaluative documents to justify their ongoing existence.... I have on several occasions spoken with New Zealand artists who have confessed that 'when I see the Creative New Zealand logo on something [a flyer, a book, a poster, a cd] I know that it's going to be rubbish' ... 'Rubbish' in this case means work that is not politically astute, it is not socially conscious or diverse in its representation and most importantly it conforms to a pre-ordained agenda.... While the logos and business plans have never looked shinier, the complexity and depth of our cultural and intellectual life in New Zealand has never looked so poor.*
- *Our work often feels dated, naive, under realised when sitting alongside the best new contemporary writing from around the world. We have great talent and potential, we can do better. Benchmarking is important – this can only come from seeing more work internationally and reading more work from*

around the world regularly. We are also seeing a lot of practitioners working within their same group of friends/colleagues over and over again and putting work on that doesn't show any major leaps in artistic stretch and or creative and production development. This is because the process lacks rigor, there is no challenge or expectation in the process to improve and or be better.

- *Kahikatea. This appears to be a bog of purgatory for the companies unlucky enough to be stuck in it. ... These are small businesses failing to become medium-sized businesses. Kahikatea is a bottleneck. The answer is not to toss them all out of the programme and hope someone else beneath them is thinking differently – in most cases they're not. This is an industry crisis that will atrophy the growth of theatre and audiences in this country. I can't solve it for you, but I can see it, and I'm scared because it really affects my ability as a theatre-maker, or as I like to see it, businessman, to grow my national customer base.*

Other issues not raised in this summary

A number of other issues were raised by respondents that we have not touched on elsewhere in this summary of the feedback. These included:

- ways for a number of organisations to share services – for example, access to hot desks, production services, office equipment, and subsidised performance spaces
- an increasing lack of experienced producers, directors and designers (including lighting, set, costume and production designers)
- linked to the lack of experienced practitioners, a strong perception that many theatre artists and practitioners are unable to make a living wage from theatre work

- suitable affordable venues in which to rehearse and/or present work
- support for artists and practitioners working across artforms
- coming to grips with the challenges and opportunities offered by digital technologies.

For example:

- *There are a lot of artists working **between** disciplines, and sometimes may not seem to fit within the theatre sector. However, these companies sometimes find themselves turned away or misunderstood in other sectors (DANCE, INTER ARTS, etc) because of the silo'ed nature of the system. I think it important that each area should work hard at being as inclusive as possible – thus allowing artists to be more self-selecting in their chosen field.*
- *A bigger national grant would be nice, but is unlikely given the current state of the economy. So it is [to] be hoped, that with a national campaign supporting and publicising theatre, and with theatres being a bit more innovative in attracting audiences, a bigger income could be achieved through box-office sales. Which, really, is how it should be.*
- *Rethinking the Future: Theatre is on a fast track to becoming irrelevant if it does not deal head-on with the opportunities and challenges of the digital age. This extends well beyond just using social media platforms and is about a 'digital first' approach to engaging with audiences, participants and communities of interest.*
- *Future success and sustainability of the theatre sector will come down to the quality and relevancy of the work being created, and whether it will find an audience of sufficient size to support it.*

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