

Together, Creative New Zealand and NZ On Air asked research agency Colmar Brunton to survey a range of creative professionals, to better understand career sustainability in the arts and creative industries.

The research found that New Zealanders employed in creative professions juggle jobs, and rely on safety nets to ensure they can put food on the table. But even that doesn't break their passion for their creative work.

Creative New Zealand and NZ On Air will work with our sectors to drill into this research. In the meantime, we've summarised key findings and agreed three joint priorities for future action:

1

### Fair reward

We'll work towards:

- ensuring lower-paid creative professionals are paid in line with technical professionals
- lifting pay to the point where creative professionals start to feel it is a fair reward.

2

### Sustainability

We'll work to make

the careers of mid-career and established creative professionals more sustainable through more continuous creative endeavours.

3

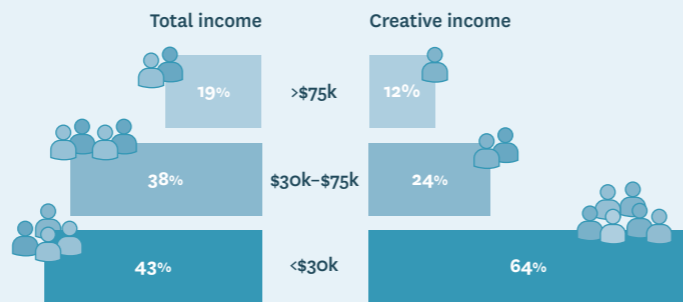
### Emerging creative professionals

We'll work with the sector (including peak bodies and guilds) to find better ways to support creative professionals at the start of their career.

## 1 Fair reward

### How much are creative professionals earning?

Four in ten creative professionals surveyed (43%) earn a total income (including non-creative income) of \$30,000 or less annually.



Compared to a median total income of \$35,800, median creative income is \$15,000. This is because just over half the creative professionals surveyed (55%) supplement their income by also working outside the creative sector.

Sixty-three percent of creative professionals surveyed feel their remuneration is unfair. The 'tipping point', from which they start to feel it's fair, is \$26 per hour.

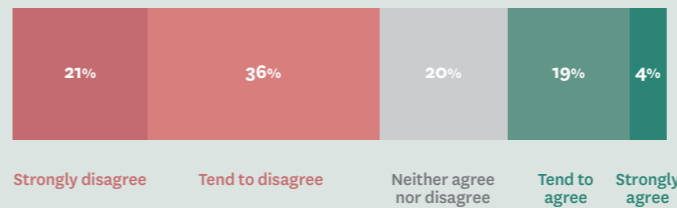
The research indicated a gender pay gap but was inconclusive as to why, so this is an area for further exploration.

## 2 Sustainability

### Are there enough opportunities to sustain a creative career?

More than half of those surveyed disagree with the statement 'there are sufficient opportunities for you to sustain a career in New Zealand'.

Close to one quarter of those surveyed agree with the statement 'there are sufficient opportunities for you to sustain a career in New Zealand'.



Some groups of creative professionals are more likely to disagree with this statement than others, including:

- 88% of those who also said they are dissatisfied with their career
- 82% of those who also said they are finding it very difficult on present income
- 74% of those who also said they are not committed to the creative sector.

Some groups of creative professionals are more likely to agree with this statement than others, including:

- 43% of those surveyed who earn more than \$100,000 per year
- 37% of those who said they live comfortably on present income
- 32% of those surveyed who have media production as their primary creative occupation.

## 3 Emerging creative professionals

### What's life like for those starting their creative careers?

The majority of creative professionals enter the creative sector between the ages of 18 and 24 (58%).

The average time spent unpaid when first entering the creative sector is one year, five months.

The expectation to do unpaid work at the start of creative careers appears to be increasing.

Younger creative professionals appear to be receiving more encouragement and support at the start of their careers than older professionals did, perhaps reflecting a change in perceptions of creative careers.

Younger people are also more likely to view going overseas as a necessity to further their career (60% of people under 40 compared to 47% of people aged 60 plus).

## How do creative professionals feel about their present income?



There's also a link between how well creative professionals are 'getting by' and their overall life satisfaction.

Those who rate their life satisfaction highest are earning more, are more likely to be living comfortably or 'getting by', are older, established in their career and working in the creative sector only.

## For creative professionals, career satisfaction is driven by a passion and love for the work they're doing.

"It's a fulfilling and inspiring career; I get to explore my own creativity, collaborate with other like-minded people and share it nationally and internationally."

"I love my work and feel very privileged that I can work at something I love and believe in, even if the rewards are predominantly not monetary."

"I love what I do and I enjoy being inspired by my surroundings, culture and people I work with. I am challenged constantly by my own need to succeed in my area of expertise."

"I'm really passionate about the work I do, and I feel very fortunate to do that work."

Some comments from survey respondents

The full research report has a lot more information to explore – you can read it online:

[creativenz.govt.nz/research](http://creativenz.govt.nz/research)  
[nzonair.govt.nz/research](http://nzonair.govt.nz/research)

We'd love to hear your thoughts on the research – let us know what you think:

Creative New Zealand  
[advocacy@creativenz.govt.nz](mailto:advocacy@creativenz.govt.nz)  
 PO Box 3806  
 Wellington 6140  
 04 473 0880

NZ On Air  
[communications@nzonair.govt.nz](mailto:communications@nzonair.govt.nz)  
 PO Box 9744  
 Wellington 6141  
 04 382 9524

## A PROFILE OF CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

Research summary

# A PROFILE OF CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

Total personal income for creative professionals is lower than the median for all salary and wage-earning New Zealanders, but comparable to what self-employed New Zealanders earn.

Median creative income is \$15,000, which is lower than total income because 55% of creative professionals supplement their income by also working outside the creative sector.

NOTE: All income information is before tax and after expenses.



**\$51,800**  
Median income for New Zealanders earning a wage or salary



**\$35,800**  
Median **TOTAL INCOME** for creative professionals (including non-creative income)



**\$37,900**  
Median income for self-employed New Zealanders



**\$15,000**  
Median **CREATIVE INCOME** for creative professionals

## Total incomes vary by artform/practice



\*Small base size for Ngā Toi Taketake, and Pacific Heritage arts; interpret with caution.

## 2/3 of creative professionals don't feel their remuneration is fair

"Is your creative income a fair reward for the time you spent on it?"



**20%**  
AGREE



**17%**  
NEUTRAL



**63%**  
DISAGREE

\$26 per hour is the level from which creative professionals start to feel their remuneration is fair.

## 2/3 of creative professionals have a safety net

The most common safety nets are:



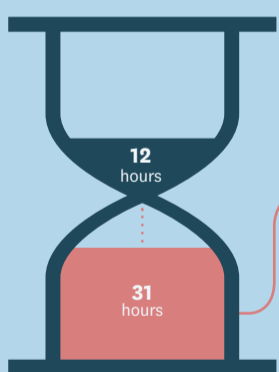
**46%**  
MY PARTNER



**40%**  
NON-CREATIVE WORK



**35%**  
MY SAVINGS



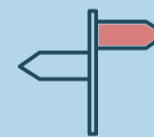
On average creative professionals work 43 hours a week...

...but they spend an average of 31 hours on their creative work.

This is reflected in the fact that **49%** are spending less time than they would like on their creative career. Some barriers are:



**59%**  
Insufficient income to make a living



**49%**  
Other work in non-creative roles

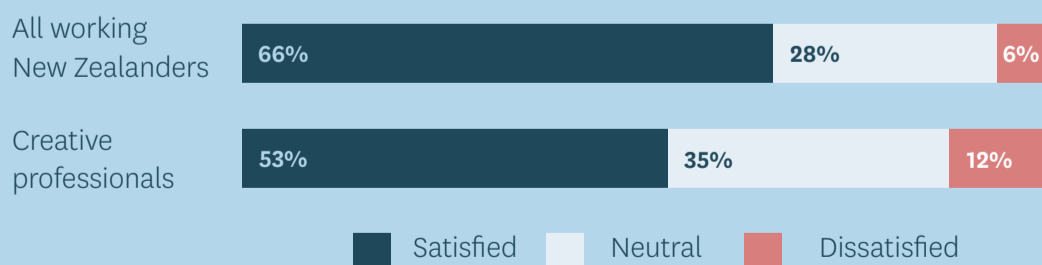


**47%**  
Continuous work not available



**33%**  
Domestic responsibilities

## Creative professionals are less satisfied in their career than the general New Zealand population



BUT:

**82%**

see themselves in the creative sector in 5 years' time, despite the challenges a creative career presents. Only 3% don't, and 15% are unsure.

Online surveys

**1,477**

completed with creative professionals.

Fieldwork conducted

**23 NOV – 10 DEC 2018**

'Creative professional' definition

Those aged 16 plus who earned at least some income from their creative work in the financial year ending 31 March 2018.