5 June 2018

Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction | Oranga Tāngata, Oranga Whanāu

PO Box 27396

Marion Square

WELLINGTON 6141

By email: [mentalhealth@inquiry.govt.nz](mailto:mentalhealth@inquiry.govt.nz)

E te rōpū Uiui, tēnā koutou katoa

**Submission to: Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction | Oranga Tāngata, Oranga Whanāu**

**From the: Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)**

1. Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this important mahi. We have a strong belief in the power of arts, culture and creativity to support the good mental health and well-being of New Zealanders.
2. We’ve provided some of the material within this submission directly to the Inquiry’s secretariat, but we thought a formal submission would also be useful in drawing the Inquiry panel’s attention to the relevant issues.
3. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:

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**Key points**

1. Given their powerful impact on well-being, we believe the arts have an essential role to play in supporting better health outcomes for New Zealanders, particularly in the mental health space.
2. We believe that there is enough international evidence and supporting practice around arts prescription schemes that such a scheme should be introduced in New Zealand, funded through Vote Health.
3. We believe that New Zealand’s creative spaces should be funded directly and consistently through Vote Health, to a level that allows them to both sustain and grow their services to people and communities around Aotearoa.

**Submission**

*The arts improve New Zealanders’ well-being*

1. There’s a growing body of research relating to the contribution of the arts to both the well-being of individuals and the social cohesion of communities. The 2017 results of Creative New Zealand’s longitudinal research study into New Zealanders’ attitudes to, attendance at and participation in the arts – *New Zealanders and the arts –* support this body of research.
2. The 2017 edition’s findings include:

* Four in ten (41 percent) New Zealanders agree with the statement ‘the arts improve how I feel about life in general’ (33 percent are neutral and 24 percent disagree)
* Just over half (55 percent) of Māori agree that ‘ngā toi Māori [Māori arts] improve how I feel about life in general’ (31 percent are neutral and 12 percent disagree)
* nearly six in ten (57 percent) New Zealanders agree with the statement ‘the arts help improve New Zealand society’ (27 percent are neutral and 13 percent disagree)
* half (50 percent) of New Zealanders agree with the statement ‘my community would be poorer without the arts’ (29 percent are neutral and 18 percent disagree).

1. A variety of reasons were given to explain why the arts improve how people feel about life in general. The top three responses were:

* makes me feel good (26 percent)
* adds enjoyment/makes me happy (14 percent)
* appreciate/understand different viewpoints (10 percent).

1. Some comments from survey respondents included:

* *“It improves my mood. It makes everything seem more beautiful.” – female, 15-29, Asian New Zealander, Auckland*
* *“I think expressing your creativity makes you feel good about yourself.” – boy, 14 years*
* *“I love dancing and performing. It makes me happy and smile. I feel more confident and not so shy.” – girl, 10 years*
* *“It helps relieve stress, and the joy of making sound together is something that is not easily recreated.” – male, 15-29, NZ European, Taranaki*
* *“Art does not prejudice your weight, or height, physical or intellectual abilities. Many people can be part of art in some shape or form and it brings communities together.” – male, 30-39, Māori, Auckland.*

1. The full *New Zealanders and the arts 2017* report is available on our website at: [www.creativenz.govt.nz/development-and-resources/new-zealanders-and-the-arts](http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/development-and-resources/new-zealanders-and-the-arts)
2. Many New Zealanders understand the benefits the arts bring to their personal health and well-being, as well as to stronger communities, but central Government is yet to embrace this within its policy-forming and decision-making. **Given their powerful impact on well-being, we believe the arts have an essential role to play in supporting better health outcomes for New Zealanders, particularly in the mental health space.**

*Arts prescriptions*

1. New Zealand health professionals (usually a general practitioner or practice nurse) are currently able to give ‘green prescriptions’ (ie, written advice aimed at increasing a patient’s physical activity and improving their nutrition). A number of countries enable health professionals to give a similar prescription but one which focuses on the arts – an ‘arts prescription’. This is written advice to get involved in some form of the arts as a means of improving patients’ health and well-being. Countries that have arts prescription schemes include Australia, Wales and the United Kingdom.
2. In New South Wales, the State Government has a strong Arts and Health strategic framework and funds an Arts on Prescription programme. Arts on Prescription uses a participatory arts programme alongside traditional health care to help older people improve their physical and mental well-being.
3. Research on the New South Wales programme shows that engaging with the arts improves the well-being of older people by: assisting older people to overcome social isolation; improving mental well-being, confidence and self-esteem; helping people through periods of loss and bereavement; and improvements in measures of physical health, such as functional ability, joint mobility and cardiovascular fitness, allowing older people to undertake increase level of general daily activity. More information on the New South Wales approach is available at: [www.hammond.com.au/services/arts-on-prescription-sector-guide](http://www.hammond.com.au/services/arts-on-prescription-sector-guide)
4. In Wales, the Arts Council of Wales was asked by the Welsh Government to explore how a more strategic approach to arts and health might be developed. As a result, the Arts Council of Wales produced a research report that was a representative audit of the principal arts and health activities taking place in Wales. The rationale was to look in more detail at the ways that the arts can make a greater contribution to the health and well-being of people in Wales. One of the goals to come out of the report was that:

*The arts should be a core component of social prescribing schemes across Wales. Specific action research should be undertaken to identify the necessary steps to develop sustainable models for arts programmes so that a more comprehensive ‘arts on prescription’ offer is embedded and available across Wales.*

From *Arts and Health in Wales – A Mapping study of current activity*, available at: [www.arts.wales/140333](http://www.arts.wales/140333)

1. The UK recently held an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Well-being Inquiry. The inquiry report’s key messages were that:

* the arts can help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived
* the arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health
* the arts can help save money in the health service and social care.

1. One of the 10 recommendations in the report was:

* *that NHS England and the Social Prescribing Network support clinical commissioning groups, NHS provider trusts and local authorities to incorporate arts on prescription into their commissioning plans and to redesign care pathways where appropriate.*

1. A case study in the report on ‘Artlift’, an arts-on-prescription scheme in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, showed that after six months working with an artist, patients had 37 percent less demand for GP appointments and their need for hospital admissions dropped by 27 percent. Taking account of reductions in costs to the NHS against the cost of Artlift interventions, this represented a saving of £216 per patient.
2. The report also notes that a social return on investment of between £4 and £11 has been calculated for every £1 invested in arts on prescription. The report is available in full at: [www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry](http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry)
3. **We believe that there is enough international evidence and supporting practice around arts prescription schemes that such a scheme should be introduced in New Zealand, funded through Vote Health.**

*Creative spaces*

1. In New Zealand, there are a number of creative spaces that support people with mental health challenges. Many of these spaces are affiliated through Arts Access Aotearoa, which advocates for people in New Zealand who experience barriers to participation in the arts as creators, audience members, readers, and gallery and museum visitors.
2. Creative spaces are organisations and places where people can make art, or participate in artistic activities such as theatre, dance, circus, music, film and creative writing. They provide space, resources and assistance in ways that will lead to self-expression, empowerment and self-development. Arts Access Aotearoa has 55 such spaces listed in its directory, from right across New Zealand. More information on creative spaces is available at: <https://artsaccess.org.nz/Creative%20Spaces>
3. An example of a creative spaces organisation is Ōtautahi Creative Spaces Trust, based at the Phillipstown Community Hub in Christchurch. Ōtautahi Creative Spaces was established in 2015 with a goal of boosting well-being, social connection and resilience through creativity. It followed research funded by Creative New Zealand which looked at opportunities for people who have experienced mental illness to access creative spaces. We understand that Ōtautahi Creative Spaces is making a submission to the Inquiry, so more information about its work will be included there.
4. Another example is Te Kuwatawata, based in Gisborne, which employs artists to create artwork as a gift of healing to help whānau in the Tairāwhiti overcome mental health issues. We understand Te Kuwatawata is supported by the Ministry of Health through a dedicated innovation fund. More the work of Te Kuwatawata is available through this news story: [www.maoritelevision.com/news/regional/maori-artists-promote-mental-health-clinic](http://www.maoritelevision.com/news/regional/maori-artists-promote-mental-health-clinic)
5. Currently, the funding for creative spaces is variable. Projects are often supported through Creative New Zealand’s Creative Communities Scheme (delivered in partnership with local authorities), but funding amounts are often less than $5,000. Ōtautahi Creative Spaces has indicated that it does not receive any district health board funding, whereas a similar space in Dunedin receives a substantial amount from its district health board.
6. **We believe that New Zealand’s creative spaces should be funded directly and consistently through Vote Health, to a level that allows them to both sustain and grow their services to people and communities around Aotearoa.**

**Background on Creative New Zealand**

1. Creative New Zealand is the arts development agency of Aotearoa, responsible for delivering government support for the arts. We’re an autonomous Crown entity continued under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014.
2. Our legislative purpose is to encourage, promote, and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders. In achieving this purpose, we recognise and uphold the principles of **participation** and **access**. Participation is achieved by supporting initiatives that encourage participation in the arts. Access is achieved by supporting the availability of projects of merit to communities or sections of the population that would not otherwise have access to them.
3. Creative New Zealand’s Statement of Intent 2016–2021 identifies the outcomes we’re seeking to achieve on behalf of all New Zealanders.

* Stronger arts communities, artists and organisations as shown by:
* high-quality New Zealand art is developed
* New Zealand arts gain international success
* Greater public engagement with the arts as shown by:
* New Zealanders participate in the arts
* New Zealanders experience high-quality arts.

1. We contribute to achieving these outcomes by delivering programmes in the following areas:

* funding for artists, arts practitioners and arts organisations
* capability building for artists, arts practitioners and arts organisations
* advocacy for the arts.

1. Creative New Zealand receives funding through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board. In 2016/17, we invested **$40.366 million** into the New Zealand arts sector.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss this submission further.

Ngā mihi rārau ki a koutou katoa



Nā David Pannett

**Senior Manager, Planning, Performance & Advocacy Services**