

Summary of our engagement:

Ngā Toi Māori sector



WHY – Our purpose

Since November 2017 Creative
New Zealand has been actively engaging
with the Māori arts sector to inform
the development of our National Māori
Arts strategy.

We wanted to make sure we heard from as many people and groups as possible, basing our engagement on our desire to:

- encourage sector participation;
- amplify the efforts of Creative New Zealand;
- capture and promote PR opportunities for artists;
- identify cases that can be used to support the overarching objectives of the eventual strategy; and
- better understand the approach the arts sector as a whole needs to improve outcomes and opportunities for Māori artists.

HOW – Our efforts to connect

The kanohi-ki-te-kanohi approach was vital, and enabled us to hear some of the most profound and interesting stories. We met with people from across the Ngā Toi Māori sector - not just celebrated artists but also emerging artists, advocates for Māori development, interested iwi and iwi leaders, regional arts development agencies, cultural agencies, online surveying and attendance at key events so we could get an understanding of Ngā Toi Māori at many different levels.



Toi Māori Strategy

Engaging with Māori Artists from around Aotearoa

November 2017 - May 2018

Who took part



800+

800+ Māori artists and organisations engaged kanohi-ki-te-kanohi and shared their stories



Workshops with celebrated Māori artists and advocates' including a targeted rangatahi workshop



193

People participated in the online survey



215K

People reached via social media (126.9k organic, 88.3k paid)



Ngā Toi Māori Roadshow Hui held across the motu



12

Cultural agencies engaged



145.4K

Times our videos were viewed



250K

People reached through generated PR



1,100

Cups of tea / coffee consumed

What we heard: 6 key aspirational themes

Rangatiratanga

Self determination

Āheitanga

Hauora Wellbeing

Whakapapa

Mātauranga

Rangatahi

WHAT WE HEARDOur learnings

Each region and group of artists had comments and issues that were specific and important to them, but when we looked at what we heard from the sector as a whole, six main themes emerged.

We have summarised these themes and the korero we heard in support. In doing so, we've included direct quotes from the participants as we believe this is the best way to tell the story.

Theme: Rangatiratanga

A lot of Māori artists have the creative skills to turn their artforms into sustainable businesses and careers but many need support to grow their business knowledge and networks to thrive in Aotearoa and internationally.

What we heard:

"Māori artists want to be in charge of their own destiny and support themselves and their whānau."

- "Māori are navigators and innovators. We can dream big and powerful."
- "I want to be in full control of my and our destiny."
- "It remains difficult for artists to sustain a full-time career, which results in whakamā around self-identifying as an artist."
- "Many artists need to work part time. This impacts on their ability to explore their creative potential."
- "There is a lack of support for marketing projects."
- "It would be great if you could establish a dedicated marketing strategist."
- "More financial resourcing makes more sustainable careers for artists, so find funding to help create more sustainability for artists."
- "Artists want to be compliant with the government, like paying taxes, but I don't feel equipped for that. I need

- education and support because I was never taught this in school. I'm a maker and creator I don't know how to do that other stuff."
- "I worry about the transition of emerging artists from art schools to a professional arts career."
- "I am often financially disadvantaged to continue producing and writing, because I have to earn income to survive."
- "The greatest challenge is the inability to make a living from what I do."
- "If I was made aware of a solution for me to be supported financially in order for my ideas and art concepts to be produced and showcased, and to then gain income, the biggest roadblock as a rangatahi artist would be wiped."
- "For me personally, it's like I have an obligation to uphold our traditions."
- "There are pathways for economic development and success through the arts for sure, but it needs to be managed properly to retain the integrity of our work, our culture, our heritage."
- "The issue is that Pākehā are predominantly the intermediaries, curators or interpreters of Ngā Toi Māori."

"There is a lack of strong unified Māori advocacy across the industry resulting in a fragmented sector and non-distinctive representation of Aotearoa."

- "The lack of inter-agency co-ordination and collaboration is exacerbated by an absence of clear, capable and robust leadership from art practitioners."
- "There is a lack of strategy, leadership and advocacy across the entire sector."
- "It would be really helpful if there was a consistently supported network to be established to help with access, advice etc."
- "There's no voice to lead and advocate for Toi which leads to less visibility of Ngā Toi Māori in the rohe. It could result in the loss of the richness that Te Ao Māori can add to the value and uniqueness of our entire community."
- "There's lots of very talented people that aren't joined up together."

There is little robust and meaningful Māori representation and participation in all decision making across the arts and cultural sector.

- "Māori artists are not included at the decision-making table, yet are called upon when it is felt appropriate, undermining the proposition that the Māori creative sector brings to cultural, social and economic outcomes for all New Zealand."
- "Māori do not see themselves participating actively or meaningfully within the current governance and management framework."
- "There's a lack of youth involved in decision making. Create youth boards to delegate power and influence."
- "Council is responsive to those that shout loudest and Māori don't shout very loud."
- "Programmers need more Māori at decision making levels to change the hold on what is programmed."

"Arts leadership is a growing concern, with the next generations needing to be recognised and included in leadership roles."

- "The younger generation seek to stand alongside current Māori leadership in a complementary fashion to help develop a relevant and future focussed strategy."
- "The younger generation are empowered by te reo me ona tikanga and are ready to complement current leadership in a world defined by fluid trends and influences. They need to be given the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing reshaping of our society."
- "With no succession planning there is potential to lose Mātauranga for this rohe."

"There is a strong understanding that artists must look to the future for resilience and opportunity, and that may mean outside of their local area."

- "As our arts have started to flourish we can see cultural tourism opportunities starting to build. We can see how we could strengthen our marae even more by sharing our taonga through whare toi."
- "In a practical sense, revitalising traditional arts, crafts, practices (e.g. house building), waiata, kapa haka all provide the cornerstones for integrated cultural

- tourism to be owned and run by tangata whenua (internationally)."
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- "Cultural Tourism is considered an opportunity within reach"
- "I know there's an opportunity to do work with the international market. Tourists are all looking for taonga. A company comes in every week to do packaging to ship taonga overseas for tourists."
- "Our market is a visitor's market and they are looking for good art and good quality."
- "There are lots of festivals and events [here], which provides good prospects for selling and marketing of art works as well as gaining exposure."

"A lack of safe and / or kaupapa Māori spaces was identified across the country."

- "There are many art spaces, theatres, galleries and learning places for the arts in [this city], however kaupapa Māori or culturally safe places are not present in [this city] at this stage."
- "A lack of spaces and venues Māori space is what's holding us back."
- "A Māori Quarter ... full of artist studios, venues, cafes, a cinema, business hub, bars, bi-lingual signage, public art, video installations, galleries..."
- "It would be great to have a space led by Māori."
- "I would like to have more spaces that artists can come together to exchange ideas."
- "The art institutions in [this city] are not safe spaces for Māori to create and grow. It's not a nurturing environment for Māori"
- "When you look at the mainstream arts sector, it appears healthy, there's lots happening, venues, galleries and museums are everywhere, but the same cannot be said for the Māori arts sector. What we need are Māori cultural spaces where Māori artists can gather to network, share matauranga, create art, exhibit art, get business support etc., and all across the country."

Theme: Aheitanga

Many people are aware of Creative New Zealand processes, but there is an opportunity to look at the application, assessment, reporting and communications processes to see where Creative New Zealand can improve and better align with other funding agencies to better deliver for Māori and all New Zealanders.

What we heard:

"The funding model, both structurally and financially, limits the potential of artists to grow and deliver meaningful work that will benefit the wider community of Aotearoa."

- "The application process itself is a barrier to applying and the timing of applications don't fit into the timing of art projects."
- "The process and nature of competitive and projectbased funding is stressful and stifling of creativity."
- "A more efficient and effective funding model where Māori art can flourish needs to be developed and funded."
- "The current funding model is complicated, inflexible, archaic and restrictive."
- "There is a need to build confidence, restore trust, support leadership and develop deeper partnerships across the entire sector (artists and agencies); to work more collaboratively."
- "Artists and their knowledge can be lost forever under the current funding model which means only the very best are represented and / or funded."
- "The funding application doesn't consider tikanga in all aspects of Māori art, which includes manaaki of ngā tangata."
- "Financial challenges make being a creative person an added burden."
- "I would like to see Creative New Zealand offer alternative funding options. So if the applicant wasn't selected for Creative New Zealand there will be a list of philanthropists or other organisations or iwi funding schemes that might be keen to help. It'd be cool if Creative New Zealand could help holistically in that way".

There is little visible alignment across agencies and Ministries or even at local council level.

- "Disconnection is exacerbated by the practice that most artists often work as individuals or in silos. At the same time, relevant funding Ministries or agencies operate with a silo mentality."
- "A lack of cohesion and alignment across agencies leads to replication and conflict, diluting the overall benefit that the arts community can offer all New Zealanders."
- "I need help to navigate funding opportunities."
- "There is an obvious lack of leadership or strategy for arts at a national and local level."
- "There is little connection between departments, knowing where to go, it feels like we are constantly being transferred."

"The arts sector is fragmented with little direction and support for all artists - some artists and artforms seem to attract more attention and resource than others for no visible reason."

- "Fragmentation within Māori society is reflected within the Māori arts and culture sector."
- "The Māori art sector is fragmented, artists are not aligned, there is a lack of a strong unified approach and advocacy."
- "The inequities that are present for Māori across society exist across the arts sector."
- "Access to funding is difficult for the majority of artists, minimising the potential for this sector and New Zealand."

"We need to simplify the current funding model for better access to funding and support."

- "The role of Creative New Zealand and other agencies involved in the arts sector is not widely understood by Māori, particularly by rangatahi."
- "Use of intimidating language"
- "Inflexible timeframes of funding agencies"



- "Institutionalised criteria needs to be revisited"
- "Definitions around artforms"
- "We need someone to assist with writing applications"
- "Applying to [our iwi] is easier than applying to Creative New Zealand. The Creative New Zealand process is too much work for no result at the end."
- "Not everyone has the confidence to approach people for help on funding applications. Need to keep the application low key and whanau friendly."
- "Ease up on the criteria. I have an amazingly talented daughter who has written her own music and can't get anywhere in her own country."
- "Simplify funding applications, the current format is unfriendly and sterile."

We get invitations to perform [at Festivals] offshore. We have one chance to apply for funding through Creative New Zealand for airfares. It takes nine weeks to turn the applications around. Festivals can't do any promo's because airfares aren't guaranteed, no one can sign contracts It's a terribly inflexible process. What about 10 day turnarounds. This would support

smaller indigenous events that are run under NGO/ voluntary steam."

"We need to think more creatively about the processes we administer."

- "Provide more ways for applicants to pitch for funding."
- "Create more opportunities for proposals to be delivered face-to-face, or digitally or Dragons Den like."
- "We need to encourage a practice of critiquing and experimentation, a culture that allows artists to 'fail safely' in order to quickly move on."
- "Creative New Zealand needs to understand the unique needs of each and every community. We are different to other rohe."
- "We would like a meaningful relationship with Creative New Zealand, not just a transactional one."
- "Could you change the funding process? The criteria and the actual filling out of the application form - what about using visual presentation and technology, like filming a client talking and making her or his work or talking and referring to their arts practice."

Theme: Hauora

There is a growing awareness of the holistic nature of hauora and ngā toi Māori, but more can be done to understand and promote the role of arts in relation to community well-being. This is important for both those engaging in and participating in ngā toi Māori and we need to work with other agencies to consider the implications of this.

What we heard:

"We need to demonstrate understanding of the social and economic benefits of Māori art and culture to nation building."

- "If Māori art is valued, it increases well-being in Māori society."
- "Art creates a safe space for us to explore critical issues, challenge restrictions and develop innovative forms of expression that allow us to own, interpret and share stories for the benefit of our communities."
- "Look after the artists and they will play a role in healing the community."
- "We can build bridges and uplift the well-being of humanity. Kia mau ano, te mana motu haka. Mātauranga tuku iho."
- "Art is my safe place, it is a way of holding on to Te Ao
 Māori and how we retain korero tuku iho."
- "This is where artmaking generates its most important value and contributions to society and the economy - a place where individuals and communities can voice themselves in meaningful ways taking into account their entire humanity - rational, non-rational, irrational, intellectual, heartfelt and more."
- "The arts enrich our hearts and souls to help us to become creative problem solvers in the issues we face every day."

"We need to ensure the arts sector is fit and healthy so that we can deliver on our potential for the benefit of all."

- "Art is a way to balance life."
- "Our art transcends social issues and uplifts people.
 Mental wellness is tied into creativity."

- "Artists are the oil of communities. They keep things going in communities. Artists revive things. Creating knowledge, retaining knowledge, connecting knowledge for people and communities"
- "There needs to be balance mauri ora. The holistic side of the art is important for Māori. You can't separate people from the art and art from culture and identity."
- "We want to share our art in a real way. It's about our identity, revitalisation, connecting and creating opportunities for everyone by sharing richness outwards and getting benefits back in."

"Arts is an opportunity to heal social and other issues."

- "There's an overwhelming sense of community service by Iwi Māori through the arts."
- "I want to elevate our people for a better well-being."
- "We use art as the vehicle to better engage and support at-risk kids in schools."
- "Practicing my art helps keep me well. Ngā Toi Māori helps heal at a wairua and hinengaro level."
- "Art is about sharing a story for those who are unable to do it in other ways."
- "It's about healing arts helped me get through a grieving process when I lost my sister."
- "It helped me overcome addiction and depression."

Theme: Whakapapa

For many, whakapapa inspires them to engage and participate in ngā toi Māori.

"Ngā Toi Māori helps me know who I am."

- "Ngā Toi Māori gives Māori a pathway to interrogate the notion of what it means to be Māori in an everchanging world."
- "Art creates a space for an ongoing discussion about the nature of being Māori and what that means in an evolving world."
- "Knowing who I am and how I want to be with others is becoming more important. I am no longer a clone of society."

- "Art is about the truth of who we are, our experiences, the world around us."
- "We need to see more Toi Māori in public spaces to strengthen our sense of belonging and identity as a people and a community."
- "Toi Māori gives our children a sense of belonging, our adults a sense of identity, our country pride and place on the international scene. Worldwide people love our culture."
- "I need to create. I use it to explore and reclaim my identity as Māori. Since having my daughter it has become more important to me. I want to create visual signals so our tamariki and mokopuna know who they are. "
- "When I do my toi Māori I feel like a real Māori even though I can't speak Te Reo."
- "I create to empower myself through accessing my soul, expressing it, realising that we are connected to all there is. This empowers others healing our way forward. It's about growth and development."
- "One of the greatest things we can give is of ourselves. We create every single aspect of our lives therefore when we create we share an expression from our soul. We are our own piece of artwork so when we create we give of ourselves."
- "It gives me a pride in my identity, providing opportunity for our tamariki and rangatahi through an intergenerational approach. We need to see more ngā toi for Māori children to see themselves represented through nga toi in an art gallery"
- "I grew up under the carving table. The rhythm attracted me. I loved listening to the beats of carving. Poetry, writing, singing, music, photography. There aren't many partitions in art. Weaving, my mother was a weaver. Total exposure to art growing up. I like to make my own brushes out of sticks that I've chewed up. I enjoy teaching Te Reo and being immersed in my culture."
- "He mahi toi, he reo. Ngā mahi toi affirms and promotes our identity, our language, our whenua, our whakapapa and our well-being."

" I draw inspiration from my whakapapa."

- "Drawing inspiration from whakapapa lets artists formulate their views to explain their way of looking at the world."
- "Art brings the distinct stories of each iwi alive by embedding them into our landscape."
- "My passion is floral arts and it's a connection to my mother. Tupuna, Whenua, Tinana, Hinengaro, wairua, and whānau."
- "I want to tell our stories. We don't stand on our own we stand there with our tupuna."
- "Our tupuna were story tellers, whakairo and weavers. It is all of our responsibility to help other whānau to tell their stories and celebrate whānau."
- "Toi Māori is in my blood, my DNA, passed down for generations."
- "My grandparents were my greatest influence. I've grown up around harakeke and music and influence from my grandparents. They often had weavers come around; I went out harvesting with them when I was young; those were my inspirations."
- "When you're fully engaged in your mahi you're sitting on a different paradigm, your tūpuna are whispering to you; whakapapa... connecting us and going back to the creator - artists are good at that."
- "Knowing your whakapapa, the stories and history of your ancestors is very empowering, giving you the strength to overcome many challenges."

"Māori culture is a bridge to connect all people."

- "Acceptance and familiarisation with Māori culture promotes a sense of inclusiveness"
- "In communicating the Māori story, Māori art provides a way for non-Māori to understand what it means to be a New Zealander."
- "Māori art provides an authentic expression that inspires and builds connections in a way that enhances our well-being for the benefit of future generations, and the world."

- "Toi Māori is important to understand who we are and what we want, to create social connection and social well-being."
- "We need to enhance opportunities for Te Reo for all New Zealanders. Being Māori isn't as cringing as it used to be. I feel that we are on the tipping point of change."
- "Art brings people together, and can enhance and change communities through the beautification of spaces and places."
- "Our uniqueness is distinctive and can help build a cohesive community and national identity."

"There is a lack of understanding around the value of Māori art and culture in nation building."

- "The benefit Māori art and culture can offer has been underestimated and under-utilised. This is backed up by overseas commentators."
- "The Māori story is a globally active one. Māori values, experience and story, as reflected in our arts, connect with international audiences."
- "Māori arts and culture is given less attention than other mainstream arts, yet is an essential component to strengthening our unique identity."
- "Our works are not just a work of art they reflect the tikanga and culture of our people."
- "Māori is seen as a distinctive identity element of Aotearoa yet Ngā Toi Māori is not on the same funding platform as other art forms."
- "Te Āo Māori brings the Māori story into a Pākēha perspective - hearing and seeing the Māori cultural narrative in our everyday landscape, our nation, our people so we can celebrate our unique cultural identity and cultural capital is increased."
- "There are many popular arts events although they're not well attended by Māori artists."
- "Society valuing the contribution Māori artists can have to uplifting their community, both traditional and contemporary. For us, it's important."

Theme: Mātauranga

Transmission of mātauranga Māori occurs, but more co-ordination is needed across the sector to ensure this passing on of knowledge is consistent, sustainable and accessible so artists can grow and communities can see themselves all around them.

What we heard:

"Sharing mātauranga promotes inclusivity and brings us together."

- "We want to encourage inclusive participation by preserving Te Ao Maori so we can empower all people in New Zealand."
- "Acceptance of and familiarisation with Māori culture will assist with the preservation of histories, cultural values and the natural world."
- "The arts is a way to broaden people's thinking, to excite curiosity and communicate cultural values to society."
- "Art helps reduce the grey spaces between us."
- "Our contribution to Aotearoa goes way beyond just ourselves. We add value not just to the arts sector and Māori, but for the benefit of all New Zealanders – and globally."
- "My ultimate goal is to transfer the mātauranga that I've learnt and support succession planning."
- "I create access to Māori cultural experiences, Te Reo, tikanga, authentically; a dual perspective for people to learn and engage."
- "Art and culture are inseparable; it's our responsibility to teach it for the betterment of everybody. It's all about tino rangatiratanga"
- "Art is a key part of how our ancestors passed their knowledge onto the next and I would like my artworks to do the same for myself and the community, to empower."

"Mātauranga is not just about 'traditional' Māori based artforms, but includes contemporary and non-Māori art forms too."

 "Art provides an important means to connect to and celebrate Mātauranga Māori, whilst still giving artists the

- freedom to develop new artistic expressions informed by various world views and influences."
- "What is contemporary art? It's a question that hasn't been answered neatly and it's time to take that question off the table. Instead we could ask what does contemporary art do for Māori?"
- "There's a sense of disconnection between the people creating modern art and traditional organisations and artists."
- "Toi Māori is many languages."

"We need a systemic and co-ordinated way to share knowledge."

- "We need to build education and support networks to strengthen Mātauranga Māori across New Zealand as this is the heart of the Māori creative arts sector."
- "It would be great if there was a way to set up teina / tuakana mentoring programmes that everyone could be part of - not just people who are 'in the know' or who already have the networks."
- "My biggest need is development. There's nobody to look up to in my industry. I want to go up to the next level. It's really hard to figure out what you need to do to get to the next level. How do I find out? How do we build that bridge?"
- "Education of Te Āo Māori through Ngā Toi Māori in school is crucial to understanding and creating value for all."
- "It's about getting people together for networking in order to do the mahi smarter."
- "If the teaching is incorrect we're going to lose the depth and richness of our cultural identity that make us
- "Our nannies did mahi toi and taught us; once upon a time mahi toi was strong at the marae. We made a commitment a long time ago to develop the momentum again and revive mahi toi."
- "We need to identify individuals and pull together forums from within marae, hapu and iwi to pass on Mātauranga Māori - identify leaders to lead change."
- "I work with youth and the arts to ensure that they become equipped to create a sustainable arts practice."

- Challenges remain around protecting the intellectual property of artists and the community
- "Cultural misappropriation is still occurring on a regular basis, nationally and globally."
- "Misappropriation of cultural expressions and competition from copy-cat products that claim to be Māori made not only undermine cultural integrity but impact on artist sustainability."
- "We aren't any clearer about accessing, utilising and benefit-sharing of taonga Māori - indigenous flora and fauna and Māori iconography, artforms and te reo."

"The diminishing pool of expertise has an impact."

- "There is a small group who enjoy mana, authority and trust within Māori communities, who are well regarded and respected proponents of Mātauranga Māori. This diminishing pool of expertise has an impact across Māori society, including the arts and culture sector."
- "Loss of mātauranga has led to a yearning for more knowledge"
- "The loss of Mātauranga Māori could undermine the sustainability of toi Māori."
- "We need to instil the depth of our cultural knowledge by training people the correct way and taking the time it requires instead of fast tracking young people before they're ready."
- "Loss of mātauranga within each marae means a loss of culture, e.g. arts falls over then we lose our foundation of our culture and who we are and therefore we lose the unique identity of Aotearoa."
- "With no succession planning there is potential to lose mātauranga for this rohe."
- "We've lost of lot of mātauranga Māori and now we have to bring in tutors to teach us."
- "We were once a proud hapū sought after for our weavers and muka manufacturers, however with the loss of wetlands and natural resources the skill is almost lost.



Theme: Rangatahi

Some rangatahi are actively engaged in ngā toi Māori, so we need to nurture this passion whilst encouraging other rangatahi to be engaged to create intergenerational change.

What we heard:

"Rangatahi are passionate about transforming the current narrative and media representation."

- "I want to ensure that while distinctive Māori values are reflected in the arts, Māori move to more future focussed storytelling, that our people claim a space in an evolving world of science fiction, artificial intelligence, virtual reality."
- "We need to use the arts to mirror role modelling through changing the narrative for Māori."
- "The digital world doesn't mean we don't have a human or social consciousness."
- "Māori artists continue to explore new ways to create and deliver content that is relevant, inclusive and has broader reach."

"Digitisation has changed the world by connection and improvement for the better... and it will continue to accelerate."

- "We are digitised and connected to the world, although it's changing fast. Soon a younger generation will surpass us."
- "Digitisation and technology will accelerate the breaking down barriers and opening opportunities. We want to be at the forefront."
- "As the world moves towards more and more automation and artificial intelligence, it is predicted that art will play a larger role in allowing individuals and communities to engage with each other and fill the void."
- "Social media helps me to go beyond barriers and gives me a safe place to express myself"
- "What we as Māori need is an online art gallery or shop that is regularly sponsored on social network sites"

"Authenticity is key."

 "Being real and authentic; blended with our values, is our way of being. We are a new generation."

- "We will express our story our own way."
- "Arts has to be perceived as more than just a commodity or content. It needs to be seen as a means to allow us to become more authentic and truthful with ourselves and each other."
- "People look for authenticity, our arts are an essential component in expressing our unique and authentic identity."

"If your structures don't work, and you aren't taking the time to build meaningful relationships, rangatahi don't have time to wait."

- "Poor engagement with rangatahi opens Creative New Zealand up to losing relevance with the incoming talent pool."
- "If the old model doesn't work, we will go around it."
- "Open sourcing is about the betterment of all. We don't believe in or need the power structures of the past."
- "Your application processes are really antiquated."