

Good Practice Guidelines

Investing in Ngā Toi

- Creativity, Culture and the Arts

He taonga Ngā Toi, kia whāngaia, kia tipu, kia rea
Creativity, Culture and the Arts are treasures, to be nurtured, to grow, to flourish.



Drawing from existing national and international research and complemented by interviews with sector experts, these guidelines have been developed by Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi, supported by Creative New Zealand.

Introduction

These good practice guidelines have been developed to support the decision-making of arts and culture sector funders and those looking to invest in the sector. They outline how creativity, culture and the arts contribute to our social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing, and how funders can effectively invest in the arts and culture sector to achieve their strategic outcomes.

What is Ngā Toi?

The term 'ngā toi' encompasses cultures, creativity and art; and to better reflect the way that art, creativity, language and cultural knowledge are understood as an integrated whole that isn't always captured by the more Western framing of 'art'. Our framing of the sector acknowledges that ngā toi are vital to our wellbeing as individuals, as whānau, as communities. Ngā toi are an integral part of our nation's culture and identity. In most indigenous languages, there is no specific word for art; this is viewed as everyday life. Indigenous cultural frameworks are encompassed in our definition of ngā toi Māori and Moana Oceania (Pacific Peoples). Ngā toi encompasses artists, film makers, photographers, community practitioners, composers, potters, sculptors, writers, actors, dancers, weavers, singers, carvers, performers, and other creators that feed our spirits.

For the purposes of this document we are using the term the arts alongside using ngā toi.



Why invest in ngā toi - creativity, culture and the arts?

Creativity, culture and the arts are vital to our personal and collective wellbeing, and to our success as a nation. Their value is immense and multi-layered. They delight us, challenge us, and bring communities together to celebrate, create or advocate for change. They support innovation and take our stories to the world.

As more funders develop strategies that prioritise social and wellbeing impacts, challenges are created for both arts organisations, which need to demonstrate how they can fit with these funding strategies, and funders who wish to identify how the arts can help them achieve wellbeing outcomes.

By understanding how the arts achieve a wide range of outcomes for individuals, families, whānau and the wider community, funders will see how the work of artists, creatives and arts organisations align with their funding strategies.

This is especially true for funders which have strategies focused on wellbeing outcomes. Many of the wellbeing outcomes identified in arts projects, or projects which use arts as a vehicle for social change, should resonate with funders' strategies that seek social and wellbeing outcomes in the communities in which they invest. Funders can also play a significant role in building a stronger sector to enable it to achieve more deep and sustainable wellbeing outcomes for communities.

Beyond the intrinsic value of arts and culture, the range of outcomes that can be achieved by the arts can be described across four domains: cultural, environmental, social and health, and economic. These are described in the diagram below.

Culture

The arts:

- contribute to our identity as a nation, region, communities, iwi, hapu, whānau, and as individuals
- can increase the awareness and knowledge of the people and places of importance to tangata whenua and local communities
- strengthen cultural identity, belonging and inclusion
- enable diverse communities to express and celebrate their cultural identity
- support the revitalisation of te reo Māori and Mātauranga Māori
- increase knowledge of Moana Oceania (Pacific) communities to understand the place of Aotearoa within our moana
- support the revitalisation of Moana Oceania (Pacific) languages and cultural expression

“What weaving has given me as a Māori wahine is the confidence to stand up in this world and say, ‘I am here, I am Māori, I am a weaver.’”
– Manaia Carswell, first graduate of the Hetet School of Māori Art online course.

Environment

The arts:

- build communities' connection to the whenua and moana
- create spaces and places that people value and want to care for
- support connection to social, natural and built environments
- help embed Indigenous knowledge around the collective (of culture, environment and people being one)
- create a sense of place, belonging and civic pride

“Art is our core business. It's a public service that cuts across everything we do... it's also essential to the collective social wellbeing as a community and as a civilisation. It also offers a lot in terms of how we can deal with our environmental challenges and how we communicate with people, and how we get people on board with the broader systemic changes that we need to achieve in order to build a safer climate future for those that come after us.”
– Aaron Hawkins, Mayor of Dunedin

Social & Health

The arts:

- create a sense of belonging, connectedness and greater understanding between communities
- support wellbeing through physical and mental health outcomes
- enhance communities' ability to deal with social challenges
- increase knowledge and provide opportunities to learn
- support recovery from unexpected shocks or disasters through supporting social cohesion and opportunities for people to share experiences
- increase confidence and empowerment
- support behaviour changes
- enhance civic engagement and participation by acknowledging and embedding Indigenous and diverse ways of knowing, seeing and doing

“Young people are using art to share these ideas...rage, intergenerational pain, joy, laughter, most importantly hope. We're using art as a vehicle for social change, and it's powerful.”
– Zoe Palmer, teen mental health campaigner

Economic

The arts:

- contribute to New Zealand's economy, supporting both the development of our creative industries and a national culture of innovation
- enhance our international brand
- provide jobs and careers for artists and practitioners
- help make our cities and communities great places in which to live, work and play

“The creative industries contribute approximately \$17.5 billion to New Zealand's GDP. (New Zealand Institute for Economic Research, 2020) 64% of New Zealanders agree that the arts contribute positively to the economy.”
– Creative New Zealand, 2020

Good practice guidelines

– key considerations for funders

Many funders are already recognising the contribution that creativity, culture and the arts make toward outcomes that are important to communities; they understand that they have several levers to help achieve those outcomes such as funding, brokering, convening, conducting and sharing research, and supporting capability development. The following guidelines outline some of the ways funders may consider focusing their investment to ensure they are able to deliver cultural, environmental, social, health, and economic outcomes such as those outlined above.

Understand and support the long-term outcomes generated by the arts

The arts create significant social, economic and cultural value for our country, society, communities, whānau, hapū, iwi and individuals, as outlined above. They can have a positive impact on community cohesion and inequity - particularly during times of crisisⁱⁱⁱ. Evidence shows a clear and strong link between the arts and wellbeing and health; this is being increasingly used to influence policy internationally^{iv}.

As funders' understanding of the outcomes delivered through investment in the arts increases, measuring these outcomes and sharing stories of change can demonstrate the impacts and long-term value of their investment.

Value and strengthen ngā toi Māori

Honour and enable Te Tiriti o Waitangi outcomes to support ngā toi Māori to thrive. Value collective approaches and the broad range of arts, culture and creative forms that exist in Māori and other Indigenous frameworks. This includes understanding and enhancing its intricate connection with te taiao (the environment).

Support diversity and inclusion across all levels of the sector

Moana Oceania (Pacific Peoples), people of other ethnicities, people with mental health needs, the Deaf community, people with disabilities, young people, older adults, people living in rural and remote areas, and the Rainbow community often experience inequity in access, participation and representation in the sector. Value and enable artists and communities to use and share their knowledge systems, skill sets, and perspectives.

Prioritise innovation to amplify impact

Encouraging and funding innovation and creative risk-taking in the sector can lead to longer term change and ultimately greater impact. The process of innovation often involves exploration, risk-taking, embracing failure, seeking new solutions and mindset shifts. Indigenous practices intrinsically encompass these principles: *“There are examples of innovation in Aotearoa that collide, combine, and synthesise western processes with Mātauranga Māori and Te Ao Māori. The acknowledgment of Mana Whenua and Tangata Whenua means recognising that a Māori world-view, values and frameworks, need to be at the heart of how Aotearoa innovates towards a desired future.”*^v

By supporting innovation, funders enable the arts sector to be responsive to changing demographics, community needs and crises – and to become more resilient.

Support advocacy by artists and the wider sector

There is a role for funders in supporting the advocacy work done by artists, and key sector organisations and networks.

Artists have long played a role in shaping and documenting our stories and history. They have led local and global activism to affect systems change and create mindset shifts needed for social change.

Sector development work done by arts development and regional leadership organisations and arts networks is significant. This often results in more effective policy and strategy setting, stronger arts infrastructure and a more capable sector. Their role in coordinating, convening, brokering and sharing information within the ecosystem of many stakeholders ultimately leads to greater advocacy and resilience within the sector.

Capability development to increase long-term impact, resilience and sustainability

Support a range of capacity and capability development to suit sector, organisational and practitioner needs. Evidence also shows that investing in creative capability development (development of creative practice), often leads to other forms of capability development.^{vi} Working with regional arts development organisations can help build a stronger infrastructure and support capability building within the sector.

The arts are a powerful tool to raise awareness of and address environmental sustainability.^{vii} Funders can play a significant role in supporting organisations and the wider sector to achieve environmental sustainability and climate change outcomes.





Practical funding tips...

In partnership with the sector, funders could explore a range of approaches to enable organisations and individuals within the sector to achieve greater impact, address inequities in funding and reduce funding fragmentation. Some of these may include funding, supporting and enabling:

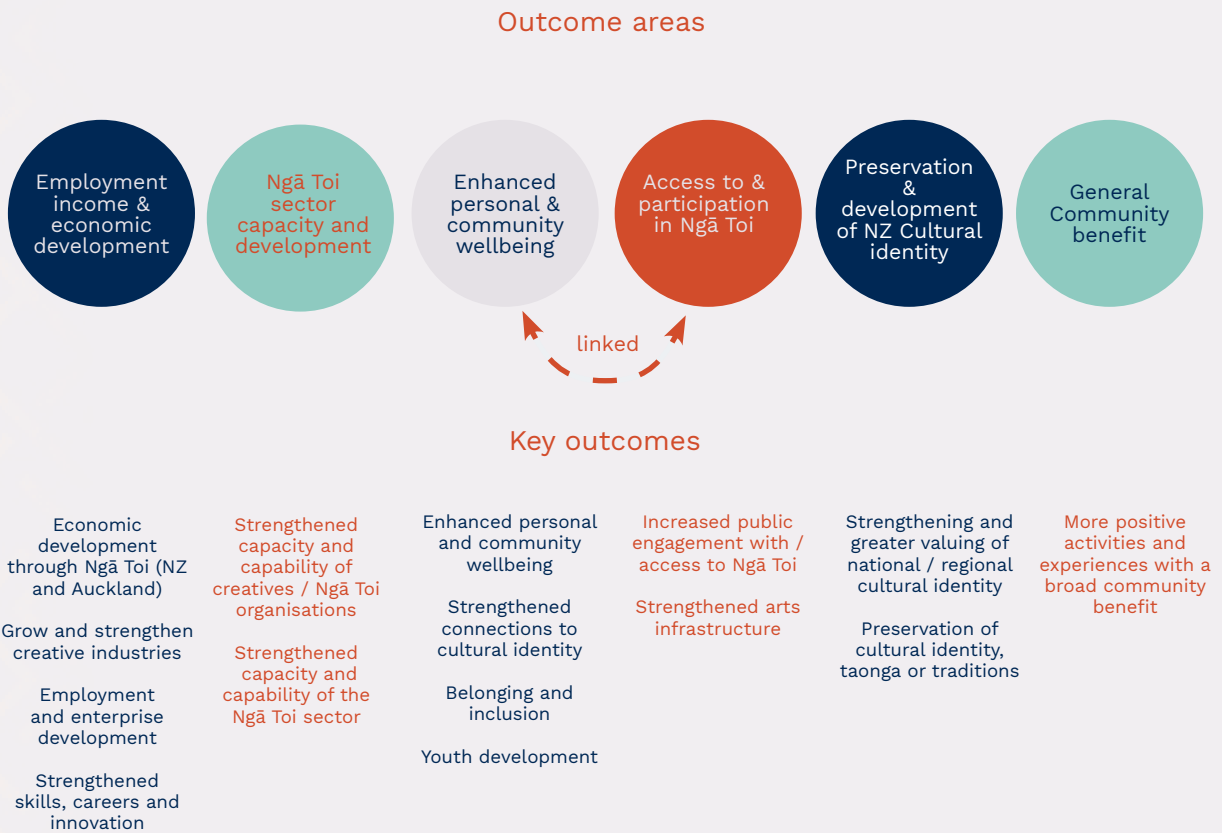
- ✓ Te ao Māori and other cultural approaches in project delivery, evaluation and learning. There is a need for greater use of cultural indicators in wellbeing and impact measurement.
- ✓ Māori, Moana Oceania (Pacific) and other communities which experience barriers in the sector. Inequity in access and participation may be addressed through more support for project development and delivery, leadership and governance development, participatory approaches in the funding process, advocacy support to strengthen diverse voices at the decision-making level, and workforce development.
- ✓ Joint funding and co-investment with other funders. Fund the infrastructure and staffing needed to maintain and develop partnerships in the sector, and collaboration between researchers, practitioners, funders and policy makers to establish shared platforms for knowledge, evidence and practice.
- ✓ Supporting regional arts development organisations as vehicles for sector development.
- ✓ Advocacy and the telling and sharing of stories for everyone in our communities.
- ✓ A range of capability development needs such as leadership and governance development; audience development; development of new platforms and channels - especially digital; financial and sustainability planning; workforce development (including internships and volunteer development); evaluation and research; deepening cultural intelligence; programme design; and strategy setting.
- ✓ Evaluation and impact measurement to support learning and improvement. This may include funding evaluations of projects or programmes, building more effective data collection processes and methods, and supporting organisations to tell their stories of change.
- ✓ Supporting organisations with their environmental and sustainability goals. This may include support for waste minimisation and upcycling activities, using the arts to educate and raise awareness of environmental issues, and enabling artists to lead and be agents of change in climate change efforts.
- ✓ Greater flexibility in the use of funds, such as supporting operating costs, or untagged funds.
- ✓ Supporting non-registered organisations or fund artists and practitioners via umbrella entities or directly.
- ✓ Multi-year grants to help with staff retention and financial planning.
- ✓ Testing and exploration phases before moving to the next stage of project development.
- ✓ New or innovative approaches. Be open to learning from failure as this often leads to long-term positive outcomes.
- ✓ Alternative approaches to contestable grant funding to encourage greater strategic collaboration and community involvement, such as participatory grantmaking.
- ✓ Supporting organisations to share back-office functions and spaces.
- ✓ Simpler and more accessible application, accountability and learning processes.



Defining outcomes to help measure impact

To build understanding of the impact and the value that arts can play in society, it is essential to invest in and support the evaluation of impact.

For funders who are interested in developing outcome measures, as an example, this is a summary of outcome areas that were developed as part of an ecosystem report in Tāmaki Makaurau.



We welcome your feedback...

This is a living document. We welcome any reflections or feedback from the sector to help us refine and update the evidence as thinking and practice evolves. Please email info@tetaumatatoiwaiwi.org.nz

Endnotes

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