

Supporting your arts community through COVID-19: a guide for territorial authorities

HE WAKA EKE NOA – WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

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FRONT COVER: Seung Yul Oh, Conduct Cumulus, 2017. Southern Quadrangle of the Arts Centre. Commissioned with support from Philipp Family Foundation and produced by SCAPE Public Art. Photo by Jade Cavalcante.

FOREWORD

Every day the arts play an essential role in our lives. They help us feel connected, see things from new perspectives, make sense of the world, feel good about where we live and find new inspiration—important attributes in these unprecedented times of change.

We know from our research that New Zealanders value the arts and the contribution they make to vibrant, cohesive and prosperous communities. As the environment around us continues to shift in often unpredictable ways, maintaining community access to and involvement in arts and culture is vital. It helps maintain a community's wellbeing, reduces feelings of isolation, and offers residents and visitors new ways to connect with each other and the special places in each town, city and region.

Local government has a key role in the leadership of our cities, towns and districts, and we're already seeing some excellent examples of agile leadership emerge. As territorial authorities respond to and recover from COVID-19, the most effective leadership is coming from those who know their communities and their needs, and aren't overlooking the need to continue to nurture the wellbeing of their people.

COVID-19 has had an immediate and severe impact on the arts sector across Aotearoa. Many artists, arts practitioners and their families are without their primary source of income. Local government's sustained support, alongside other valued partners, including mana whenua, is critical at this time to promote the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

We're optimistic that – just as artists and creatives have helped our communities recover following major events, including the Canterbury earthquakes – they will again help our cities, towns and districts to find innovative ways to adapt, recover and thrive in the future. We look forward to strengthening our relationship with you as we continue to work together.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini

My strength is not that of the individual but of the collective



Stephen Wainwright

Chief Executive, Creative New Zealand



Michael Moynahan

Chair, Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa

INTRODUCTION:

In a time of crisis and recovery, local government's role around promoting the social and cultural wellbeing of its communities, as required by the Local Government Act 2002, becomes even more critical. Opportunities to engage with and participate in the arts are cost-effective ways for councils to meet those obligations, and ensure that their communities stay connected, are happy and healthy, and live in prosperous and vibrant places. The arts communities of Aotearoa are well-gearred to support territorial authorities in this essential work.

Like many parts of the community, the arts sector has been significantly impacted by COVID-19. To support the recovery of the arts community – which is strongly connected to other hard-hit sectors such as tourism, hospitality and retail – we encourage you to work closely with your community to safeguard its creative and artistic capital.

A number of territorial authorities are already leading excellent initiatives to support their arts communities through COVID-19 and to nurture the cultural and social wellbeing of their wider communities as we move towards recovery. We're keen to support that work and the efforts of others to do the same.

We've produced this document, which provides guidance on some of the ways your council can continue to support the artists, creative workers, and arts groups and organisations in your community.

Maintaining existing levels of funding for arts and culture, actively involving the arts and artists in your council's COVID-19 recovery planning, and ensuring continued support for community-led activity and provision of community spaces will have wide-ranging benefits for the wellbeing of both artists and your wider community. These benefits include:

- healthy and happy people, including good physical and mental wellbeing outcomes
- creating cohesive communities, helping people stay connected, express their identity and understand differences

- benefits for local economies, including creation of employment and tourism opportunities
- creating vibrant towns and cities, places our communities love to live in and visit
- growing people's knowledge, ability to think critically and solve problems creatively.

How to use this guidance

Creative New Zealand strongly encourages your council to work directly with your local arts community to identify and prioritise what would best support their recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. We hope this guidance will provide some useful ideas, particularly if you're yet to get started, and we acknowledge that some councils have already commenced mahi to support arts communities. Our suggestions should not override any specific needs or solutions that your arts community communicates to your council.

The range of options set out in this document reflect the different stages territorial authorities are at in providing support for the arts, culture and their arts communities. The range of options acknowledges that different solutions will be needed in different parts of the country depending on individual arts communities' needs, as well as the resources available to councils and the need to balance arts and culture with other community needs. One size will not fit all.

While this guidance has been developed in light of COVID-19, it also represents best practice in terms of how to support and work with your arts community.



When we have big questions to grapple with – public health, climate change, social inequality, colonialism – our best creative minds offer us a wealth of opportunity in helping us answer them. That sounds like an essential service to me.

**AARON HAWKINS,
MAYOR OF DUNEDIN**



BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN ARTS AND CULTURE:



HEALTHY AND HAPPY PEOPLE

including good physical and mental wellbeing outcomes



CREATING COHESIVE COMMUNITIES

helping people stay connected, express their identity and understand differences



BENEFITS FOR LOCAL ECONOMIES

including creation of employment and tourism opportunities



GROWING PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE

and ability to think critically and solve problems creatively



CREATING VIBRANT TOWNS AND CITIES

places our communities love to live in and visit

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR ARTS COMMUNITY

- Communicating with your arts community is key. Utilise your communication channels through both elected members and council staff. A simple way to help is by proactively sharing opportunities and support available to artists and ensuring this information is accessible and reflective of the diversity of your communities by using the languages and information channels they use.
- If your region has a regional arts organisation (such as a regional arts development agency), establish or continue to maintain close connections with that organisation's governing body and staff. Your regional arts organisation will already have strong relationships and established communication channels with the artists and arts organisations in your region, and a good sense of their communities' needs. Your regional arts organisation should play a key role in informing the support that you provide for the recovery of your local arts community.
- Provide your arts community with the contact details of appropriate council staff so they can get in touch with any questions or concerns relating to funding and other support.

SOME WAYS TO REACH YOUR LOCAL ARTS COMMUNITY INCLUDE:



ARTS ORGANISATIONS

through your local community arts council or regional arts organisation



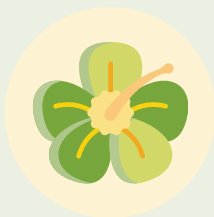
DISABILITY COMMUNITY

through networks who work within the disability community, including [Arts Access Aotearoa](#) (for specific guidance on how to engage with those with the lived experience of disability, see [Arts for all - Ngā toi mā te katoa](#) – a guide from Arts Access Aotearoa)



MĀORI NETWORKS

through local iwi, hāpu and Māori arts collectives who will know ngā toi Māori artists in your community



PASIFIKA NETWORKS

through Pasifika and other community networks



CREATIVE COMMUNITIES SCHEME

through your Creative Communities Scheme administrator.

FUNDING

Your council's own funding programmes

- Working with the arts organisations and groups noted over, encourage artists and arts practitioners from across your local arts community to continue to apply for Creative Communities funding, and consider providing application support to first-time applicants. As communicated in March 2020, your council's Creative Communities Scheme was able to continue throughout this period. You can see the COVID-19 administration guidance on our [Creative Communities Scheme Online Hub](#).

Creative New Zealand encourages all councils to avoid reducing the funding they make available to arts and cultural organisations and practitioners.

- This is important for helping your arts community to recover from COVID-19, while also ensuring that some of your council's expenditure continues to deliver cultural wellbeing outcomes.
- If your region has a regional arts organisation, maintain the levels of funding and/or in-kind support your council provides to that organisation, or make funding and/or in-kind support available if your council doesn't already do so. Reach out to your regional arts organisation to find out what particular support would help most. Providing sustainable funding to these organisations will enable them to continue to deliver strong arts and cultural development programmes in your region, and support the needs of specific arts communities. If your region doesn't have a regional arts organisation, consider what support your council could provide to assist with the establishment of one.
- Continue to provide your local arts community with clear updates on how you'll be treating any council funding rounds in light of COVID-19 and changes to your council's budgets. Consider ways that you can ease the pressure for yourselves and those receiving funding, for example:
 - pushing out closing dates of upcoming funding rounds
 - altering funding criteria to take the evolving COVID-19 situation into account (for example,

adjusting key performance indicators, adjusting project timelines, allowing funding to be reallocated)

- encouraging recipients of funding to think about, and discuss with you, how they might be able to deliver their projects in light of changed circumstances. Consider being flexible about how and when projects are delivered.
- Be aware that smaller arts organisations in your community may be struggling to meet basic costs such as rent and utilities. Consider whether any unallocated arts or community funding could be made available to support meeting those costs. If your region has a regional arts organisation, it will be able to provide you with guidance on where the greatest needs are.
- If your council is considering making funding support available to your local arts community, please feel free to contact Creative New Zealand at covid19response@creativenz.govt.nz to find out more about how we designed our support package for artists.

Supporting your arts community to access other funding support

- Continue to encourage members of your arts community to apply for the Government's [COVID-19 Wage Subsidy](#) or the [COVID-19 Income Relief Payment](#) (and any other additional central government financial support that may be made available over the coming weeks).
- To help your arts community stay up-to-date with information about Creative New Zealand's funding and other activity, direct them to the [Creative New Zealand website](#), where they can sign-up for the monthly newsletter. They could also follow Creative New Zealand on social media ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)).
- Share information with your arts community about other community funding that might be available (for example, from trusts, foundations, the Lottery Grants Board or charities). Consider whether your council could provide the arts community with a list of the other funders they can approach.

- Consider coordinating a meeting with community, philanthropic and other funders in your district or region to think about how you could coordinate funding support for your local arts community. There may be opportunities to establish co-funding models or to co-fund specific arts initiatives. If your region has a regional arts organisation, make sure it's involved in such a meeting as it will have a good understanding of the funding needs and funding application process challenges that your arts community is facing.
- Encourage artists to live-stream their works (and get paid for their mahi), or to crowdfund their projects through [Boosted and BoostedLIVE](#). Encourage your local communities to support a local artist by streaming their work and giving if they're able to.



Every day, the arts play an essential part in all of our lives – they help us feel connected, to see from new perspectives, make sense of the world, feel good about where we live and find inspiration.

**MICHAEL MOYNAHAN
CHAIR, ARTS COUNCIL OF
NEW ZEALAND TOI AOTEAROA**



COUNCIL-OWNED AND OPERATED VENUES

- If you have no choice but to cancel events, consider whether you can waive or reduce cancellation fees, especially for local artists. It's important to still acknowledge and compensate artists for the time they will have spent developing works and shows that are no longer able to be delivered.
- As restriction levels ease, consider how you can make venues more accessible to the arts community. Consider making them available to artists for rehearsals or performances at a reduced rate, or free of charge if you're able to. Once spaces can be used again for mass gatherings, consider whether you can reduce venue hire fees, particularly for local artists.
- Make space available in council-owned venues (such as i-Sites, service centres and council offices) to show work by your local arts community. Give local artists the opportunity to sell their work in these spaces.
- With communities living more locally than ever, consider whether your council could prioritise upgrades to cultural infrastructure to help draw artists and audiences to high-quality venues. Making upgrades to your council's cultural facilities will have positive flow on effects for your local construction industry.
- If making upgrades to council-owned cultural infrastructure, use the opportunity to work with mana whenua to create inclusive civic places and spaces that incorporate ngā toi Māori and reflect the distinctive stories of the people and places of your rohe (region). To ensure your infrastructure is accessible, work with artists and designers with lived experience of disability.
- Use the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to encourage your arts and cultural facilities staff to think strategically about the local communities they serve; who they are and how they can best serve them when thinking about access, inclusion and building community resilience.

REGULATORY LEVERS

- If your council leases premises to an arts organisation, group or artist, remain in contact with those tenants to understand their evolving financial position, and consider how you could provide financial assistance, such as a rent reduction for a set time.
- Consider whether you can provide any support or financial assistance to those arts institutions or independent venues with hospitality facilities (who often use the profits from food and beverage sales to support artists and arts projects). For example, consider whether you could ease liquor, encroachment or pavement use restrictions, or cut licensing fees.
- To support the delivery of unique, creative, community-centred projects, consider the example of post-earthquake Christchurch and whether your council can make public space available to artists, and ease consent and licensing requirements. Consider whether your council can help to make pop-up spaces available for arts activities and initiatives and encourage local businesses and building owners to provide such support.

INVOLVING YOUR ARTS COMMUNITY IN YOUR COUNCIL'S RECOVERY PLANNING

In order to help your local arts community recover, it's important that you keep across their challenges and needs. You should also involve your local arts community in your city, town, district or region's wider recovery from COVID-19.

Artists are creative, adaptable and resourceful, and will be able to help your council find innovative and cost-effective solutions to emerging challenges.

The arts play a vital role in recovery. In post-earthquake Christchurch, we saw the role that the arts played in helping to revitalise the CBD and empty commercial and public spaces, and the way in which they brought communities together. Here are some ways that you can involve your local arts community in recovery planning:

- Consider establishing an Arts Advisory Panel to provide your council with ongoing advice on both the recovery needs that your arts community has, and how it can contribute to wider recovery efforts. If you have one, involve your regional arts organisation. Ensure that you work with mana whenua and local Māori arts collectives to identify suitable Māori arts representatives. Alternatively, organise regular briefings to your council or relevant council committees by representatives of your local arts community, to stay informed of its situation.
- If your region has a regional arts organisation, work with them to develop a joint action plan that outlines how the arts will support recovery in your region.
- If your council is still consulting on its draft annual plan, organise an online forum to hear feedback from the arts community. Consider doing the same during your council's long-term planning process.
- Commission artists to help reactivate your CBD and empty spaces within it. Provide artists with support such as funding, access to pop-up performance or exhibition spaces, or flexibility to undertake projects or arts activities in public spaces (see

the previous points around easing restrictions for artists). Work with your local business community to see what support they're able to provide, such as use of empty shop spaces.

- Consider whether your council could adopt a "percent for the arts" policy, which provides that 1% of the capital spend on a new infrastructure or capital project is allocated to integrating art or design components within the capital works programme (for example, 1% of capital expenditure is allocated to incorporating a piece of public art or design features into the infrastructure project). Commission local artists to develop concepts and produce the creative components of the project. See [Auckland Council's Public Art Policy](#) and [Dunedin City Council's Art and Creativity in Infrastructure Policy](#) for best practice examples of such policies.
- Where you seek advice or input from artists, pay them for their contribution, as you would any other consultant. For advice on appropriate pay rates for artists, see [Creative New Zealand's remuneration guidance](#), or contact Creative New Zealand for further information.



We have a hard road ahead, but I strongly believe that cultural activities will provide the social glue and the boost to morale that will help us through, as we are seeing already. My vision is that the cultural sector will not be a victim of COVID-19, it will be a vital contributor to New Zealand's recovery.

**HON CARMEL SEPULONI,
ASSOCIATE MINISTER FOR ARTS,
CULTURE AND HERITAGE**



OTHER SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS

Here are some additional ways that your council might be able to support its local arts community.

Work collaboratively to support the arts in your region

- Consider whether you can work with the other mayors, elected members and senior managers in your region to provide collaborative, regional support for your arts communities. Involve your regional arts organisation in those discussions to ensure you have a good grasp on regional needs and opportunities.
- Think about how local and regional arts experiences might be able to form part of your city, town district or region's tourism offering, now New Zealanders are able to travel domestically again, and encourage the businesses in your region to do the same. The arts are a good way of attracting people to your part of the country, and showcasing the unique identity of your place.

Understand the impacts of COVID-19 on your arts community

- Consider setting up a localised survey of your arts community so you can understand the economic losses it has suffered as a result of COVID-19 (if your regional arts organisation hasn't already done so). If data is already available (for example, via your regional arts organisation), become familiar with those results and use them to inform your council's decision-making.
- Review Creative New Zealand's [New Zealanders and the Arts](#) research to get an understanding of what your city, town, district or region's engagement with the arts looked like prior to COVID-19. Use this data to make informed decisions about how to build the arts community's resilience to future emergencies, and the support it needs to recover.

Commission local artists

Commission an artist or arts group to produce a piece of art for a civic space; to design imagery for council publications; to design and create a piece of public art; to write your council a waiata; to create online content for the community. Pay artists in line with [Creative New Zealand's remuneration guidance](#).

HOW TO CONTINUE TO PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITIES' CULTURAL WELLBEING

- As alert level restrictions ease, encourage your communities to return to your council's cultural institutions. Artists will need support to encourage audiences to return to venues and real-life arts experiences.
- Think about innovative ways in which your council can continue to deliver community arts events. Work with artists to explore the options that might be available, including delivering events and festivals via online platforms, such as [BoostedLIVE](#). Artists have been adaptive and creative in pivoting to working in new ways during the lockdown — draw on that experience.
- Think about how you could showcase the art that your community has made while in lockdown (including local artists) via social media, your council's website or in a civic space (as they re-open).
- Remind your community of the public artworks that they can check out. Your council could create a 'Public Art Hunt' list or map that your community can use to help them find and engage with the public artworks in your city or town.
- Organise an online panel discussion with members of your local arts community that the wider community can engage with. Give artists an opportunity to talk about what they do, to share their works, and outline the ways in which the wider community can support them. Pay artists for their contribution to the discussion in line with [Creative New Zealand's remuneration guidance](#).

Further assistance

For further information on this guidance, please contact advocacy@creativenz.govt.nz