

28 April 2021

Dunedin City Council
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By email to: dcc@dcc.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Dunedin City Council
Subject: Dunedin City Council Ten-Year Plan 2021–2031 (the Plan)
From: Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on Dunedin City Council's ten-year plan. Arts, culture and creativity are an important part of developing strong and prosperous cities, and cohesive and healthy communities. We encourage Council to recognise the essential role arts and culture play in the wellbeing of its residents as it makes decisions for the future of the city.
2. We'd be happy to discuss this submission with you further. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:
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Key Points

3. **It's excellent to see investment to arts and culture via Ara Toi outlined as one of the ten key areas in Council's budget.** As the city's appetite for artistic activity and infrastructure continues to grow, it's essential that Council provides investment that enables Dunedin arts communities to create and deliver their work.
4. **We welcome Council's commitment to partnership with mana whenua, and acknowledge its work since the last ten-year planning cycle to strengthen relationships with local rūnaka and Māori communities.** We encourage Council to continue strengthening these relationships over the next 10 years and ensure mana whenua have the resources they need to engage with Council.
5. **We support the development of a mid-sized performing arts venue.** It's excellent to see Council progressing these plans, and we support its preferred option, The Athenaeum. A

venue in the Octagon area presents the opportunity to develop a creative precinct, attract investment, build audiences, and make arts experiences more accessible.

6. **We encourage Council to actively explore how it might enable greater access to venues for arts communities to make, rehearse and perform their work.** In addition to the performing arts venue development, there's increasing need for accessible and affordable spaces where artists and practitioners can share their work with audiences.

Draft Long-Term Plan 2021-2031

Our Facilities

7. We strongly support the development of a mid-sized performing arts venue, and the preferred option of The Athenaeum. Although the existing Athenaeum needs substantial changes to be made fit-for-purpose, the venue and its central city location present significant opportunities to address the critical gap in the arts infrastructure in Dunedin.
8. Creative New Zealand is glad to have been a part of the performing arts venue Steering Group and co-commissioner with Council of the feasibility study into the venue. We encourage Council to continue to work with arts communities, mana whenua, tourism stakeholders and business owners to consider:
 - how Council could manage regulatory levers to enable other sectors (eg, hospitality and events) to work alongside the Theatre to drive economic, social and cultural growth
 - the potential to develop a creative precinct in the Octagon area that can support the development of a broader arts ecosystem in the city, build audiences, attract investment, and make arts experiences more accessible
 - what other spaces in the area could be developed into whare haka, studios, rehearsal spaces and facilities for artists and creative practitioners to make and present their work, as consistent with the aspirational brief for the project
 - how Council might work with other partners to explore commercial opportunities and make the most of the venue central location.
9. We welcome the development of the South Dunedin library and community complex. We congratulate Council on its work to co-design a space that will serve the South Dunedin community, and its incorporation of local stories into the facility's design. It's also excellent to see creative facilities such as a maker space and recording studio included. As Council continues begins to build and develop this facility, we encourage it to consider:
 - how to ensure these facilities include spaces that are accessible to artists and community-based arts groups, where they can make and show their work to audiences
 - if there's opportunity to work with mana whenua to identify how the library can grow the broader public's understanding of and engagement with local stories and histories, mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori
 - how to work with local artists and arts practitioners to create a strong sense of cultural identity at the library.

10. A performing arts venue will be an asset for the city, however, there's a greater need for venues that arts communities can use to make and present their work. This includes smaller venues, venues that can host all-ages gigs, and venues with a front of house and backstage.
11. To address the need for more venues, we would encourage Council to consider:
 - how it might support arts communities through its regulatory levers (eg, ensuring noise control policies aren't prohibitive for CBD venues)
 - whether empty spaces could be repurposed or opened to provide venues
 - whether it could provide a reduced and/or fixed rate for community groups at DVML venues
 - how Council might work with other venue owners in the city (eg, school halls and performing arts centres) to subsidise access.
12. We'd also encourage Council to look for opportunities to support sector-led projects addressing venue access and sustainability. For example, Dunedin Fringe Festival are currently working in partnership with mana whenua, Park Road Productions, and Dunedin Arts Festival to develop a collaborative space. Council might consider whether there's opportunities to support partnership projects such as this to provide more long-term solutions to venue access.

Funding

13. We encourage Council to continue investing in its arts and cultural assets and infrastructure, such as Dunedin Public Libraries, Dunedin Public Art Gallery and the city's museums. Council's investment in these institutions is significant, and provides important social and cultural wellbeing outcomes for the Dunedin community.
14. Dunedin Public Art Gallery not only provides social, educational, cultural and economic benefits to Dunedin residents, but also attracts visitors by providing access to high quality arts experiences. We note the Gallery has a visitor satisfaction rate of 97%, which is an excellent rating and evidence of its immense value to the city.
15. In addition to the vital investment Council provides for arts and cultural assets, there's a desire to see more funding and investment available for local arts organisations. Additional funding would support the broader arts ecosystem in Dunedin and allow organisations to access venues, sustain operations, and build capability.
16. We acknowledge the challenging situation that Council finds itself in and its need to manage a number of competing priorities. However, we encourage Council to consider the effects of any arts and culture funding cuts on the city and its arts communities. Some of the city's key arts organisations, such as Dunedin Symphony Orchestra, saw funding cuts following COVID-19. We encourage Council to look at how it might restore funding for these organisations to pre-COVID levels of support to enable organisations to continue delivering opportunities to engage with the arts, as well as education and outreach programmes, to Dunedin communities.

Strategies and Policies

17. It's positive to see mention of the Art and Creativity in Infrastructure Policy in the Draft Infrastructure Strategy. We encourage Council to maintain its commitment to integrating art and creativity into infrastructure projects, which will develop a citywide collection of public art that increases the use of public spaces and encourages community pride.

18. There's opportunity for Council to grow Dunedin's collection of public art to ensure high quality artworks are accessible to residents and visitors. To grow support for public art, Council might consider a partnership model to match council funding with additional investment. A strong example of a partnership model for public art is Christchurch City Council's Public Art Fund, which is a partnership between the council, SCAPE Public Art and Matapopore.

Creative New Zealand's interest in the arts in Dunedin

19. 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. Our legislative purpose is to encourage, promote, and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders.
20. We recognise the importance of Otago to the arts in New Zealand. For arts that are delivered in the Otago region, **\$2.53 million** of direct financial support was provided in 2019/20. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as arts and cultural organisations.
21. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as investment into major Dunedin-based cultural organisations, including Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Blue Oyster Art Gallery, Dunedin Arts Festival and Dunedin Symphony Orchestra.
22. As part of Creative New Zealand's special initiative to support Dunedin's theatre sector following the closure of The Fortune Theatre over the past two years and in addition to our contribution towards the feasibility study, we partnered with the Council to fund development and presentation of new local theatre projects, a local Fringe Arts Award and a programme of arts activity delivered by Dunedin-based theatre group, WoW Productions. Creative New Zealand has also supported two projects led by Dunedin Fringe Festival towards a temporary performing arts venue.
23. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2019/20, funding provided to Dunedin City Council under the Scheme totalled **\$93,420**.
24. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss this submission further (my contact details are at the start of the submission).

Ngā mihi rārau ki a koutou katoa, nā



Stephen Wainwright
Tumu Whakarae
Chief Executive