

## Te Ara Mana Tautika o ngā Toi – Equity in the Arts Policy (Draft)

### Explainer

April 2026

#### What is this policy?

Te Ara Mana Tautika o ngā Toi – Equity in the Arts Policy explains how Creative New Zealand will support **equity** (fairness) **in the arts**.

The policy sets out how Creative New Zealand delivers on our responsibilities under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014 and how we will work with artists, the arts and ngā toi Māori sector and communities so that all New Zealanders can access, take part in, and benefit from, the arts and ngā toi Māori.

It replaces the Diversity in the Arts Policy 2015.

The policy will support Creative New Zealand to deliver on:

- our purpose and responsibilities under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014
- our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- the goals and values of *Tū Mai Rā, Toi Aotearoa* – our long-term strategy to 2040.

#### Why we need this policy

Across the country, our population is becoming more diverse.

Creative New Zealand’s statutory purpose is to ‘support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders’, however, feedback from the review of our 2015 Diversity in the Arts Policy shows some artists and communities still face barriers to:

- securing funding and resources
- accessing skills development and leadership opportunities, and
- being visible and represented in the arts and cultural sector, including in institutions, data, decision-making, professional roles and in audiences.

The policy will help Creative New Zealand respond to community feedback provided in the review of the 2015 policy and act consistently to make the arts and ngā toi Māori system fairer.

A summary of the Diversity in the Arts Policy 2015 review report is provided at [www.creativenz.govt.nz/equityinthearts](http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/equityinthearts).

### **What's changed since the Diversity in the Arts Policy 2015?**

Work progressed under the 2015 policy focused mainly on increasing participation and representation. Feedback showed that, while progress was made, barriers still exist in how the arts system is designed and experienced.

The draft Te Ara Mana Tautika o ngā Toi – Equity in the Arts Policy places Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a foundation for equity, focuses on systems, structures and decision-making and commits Creative New Zealand to make deliberate changes to make the system fairer over time.

### **What Creative New Zealand means by equity**

Equity (mana tautika) means being fair and just, recognising that people and communities start from different places and face different barriers.

For Creative New Zealand, equity is about:

- fair outcomes
- removing discrimination and addressing unfair systems and structures
- designing policies, programmes and services that are safe, support belonging, dignity and access to, and the fair distribution of, resources.

## **What does the policy commit to?**

The policy includes five commitments:

### **1. We serve all New Zealanders as the national arts development agency of Aotearoa New Zealand**

Creative New Zealand will:

- deliver to our statutory purpose under the Act to ‘encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders’
- ensure all New Zealanders can access, participate in and benefit from the arts, creativity and ngā toi Māori.

### **2. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is our foundation**

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi will guide Creative New Zealand to work well by, with and for the arts and ngā toi sector and communities we serve – supporting tino rangatiratanga, building strong and accountable partnerships and upholding the dignity of everyone who calls Aotearoa New Zealand home – tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti.

### **3. Mana Tautika – Equity**

Creative New Zealand will:

- create fair and accessible policies, programmes and services
- work to remove discrimination
- address unfair systems and structures across the arts.

### **4. Te Mana Tāngata Hei Kaihautū – Representation and Leadership**

Creative New Zealand will:

- strengthen our cultural expertise and leadership
- ensure our people (staff, Arts Council and external assessors) reflect the communities they serve
- foster an equitable and accessible arts and ngā toi ecosystem.

### **5. Whakawhanaungatanga – Relationships and Cultural Safety**

Creative New Zealand will:

- build long-term relationships with the arts and ngā toi Māori sector and communities
- facilitate cross-government and arts sector collaboration

- support communities with diverse whakapapa and cultures to participate confidently in the arts and ngā toi Māori.

### **Who is this policy for?**

This policy will apply to and support Creative New Zealand's:

- people (staff, Arts Council and external assessors)
- work (our policies, programmes and services); and
- way of working with artists, ringatoi and people of different ages, genders, ethnicities, disabilities, sexual orientations, locations and religions, across the arts and ngā toi Māori sector and communities we serve.

### **How this policy will be used**

An implementation plan and measures to track progress and impact will be developed with communities and sit alongside the policy.

Equity requires collective effort. Creative New Zealand will advance equity through our own work and in partnership with the sector, communities and government through the following roles:

- Steward: setting values, direction, and standards
- Partner: supporting leadership and capability
- Connector: linking organisations, communities, regions, and government
- Data holder: building and sharing regional and national evidence and insights
- Advocate: promoting the value of the arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori in all our lives.

### **We want your feedback**

We would like to know:

1. Is the policy clear and easy to understand?
2. How meaningful are the policy's commitments for your community's needs, realities and aspirations?
  - What, if anything, would make the commitments more meaningful for your community?

3. Are any communities, perspectives or lived experiences missing or not well reflected in the policy?
  - If 'Yes', please tell us which are missing
4. Which areas would make the biggest difference for the arts and ngā toi Māori sector and diverse communities if this policy is implemented well?
5. What are the biggest risks that could stop this policy from making a real difference for communities?
6. How comfortable are you with Creative New Zealand collecting voluntary demographic information (such as ethnicity, disability, rainbow identity) to help understand and track equity outcomes, if your information is protected, used respectfully and not used to identify you as an individual?
7. If Creative New Zealand could only focus on one thing first, what should it be?
8. How will you know this policy is working for your community?
9. Do you have any other comments on the draft policy?