

20 May 2025

Response to: Tertiary Education Commission Survey Questions

Subject: Changes to vocational education and training – consultation on Industry Skills Boards Coverage

From: Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)

Introduction

This document provides Creative New Zealand's responses to the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) survey questions on changes to the vocational education and training system – specifically, **consultation on Industry Skills Boards' coverage**.

The Government is proposing to establish seven Industry Skills Boards to manage standards setting and associated functions for the vocational education and training system from 1 January 2026.

The Industry Skills Boards will replace the Workforce Development Councils, established in 2021, that are also industry-led and responsible for creating qualifications, setting standards and advising the Tertiary Education Commission on vocational education. Toi Mai is the current Workforce Development Council that represents creative industries and other industries including technology, entertainment, journalism, radio and television broadcasting, sports and recreation.

The below responses were provided via TEC's online survey on 20 May 2025.

Tertiary Education Commission Survey Questions

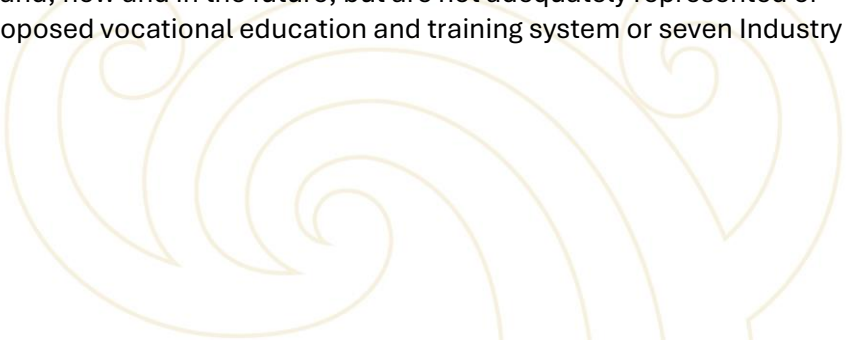
1. Overall, do you support the proposal to establish seven Industry Skills Boards? Please rate your level of support.

Creative New Zealand does not support the current proposal.

2. What aspects of the proposal do you support and why?

Creative New Zealand does not support the proposal to establish seven Industry Skills Boards as **creative industries are currently excluded**.

Creative industries are essential for high-value jobs, exports, productivity and growth in Aotearoa New Zealand, now and in the future, but are not adequately represented or supported in the proposed vocational education and training system or seven Industry Skills Boards.



3. What aspects of the proposal do you have concerns about?

The current proposal only meets the needs of traditional industries and established vocational education and training models

The proposed Industry Skills Boards are primarily designed to support traditional sectors such as construction and manufacturing, with a focus on established apprenticeship-based training models.

Newer industries (including creative and digital technologies), and the workforces that underpin our current and future productivity and export growth, are not supported in the proposal.

This means that New Zealand's vocational education and training system, qualifications and work-based learning options and approaches will be less responsive to creative industry needs, and existing workforce gaps could be entrenched – impacting on creative industries' sustainability, productivity and ability to contribute to Aotearoa's current and future prosperity.

The proposal does not support the government's aspirations included in [Amplify – A Creative and Cultural Strategy for New Zealand \(draft\)](#) consulted on in late 2024

The current proposal to shift creative industries to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority does not support the aspirations consulted on in the Government's draft *Amplify* strategy, including targets for:

- increasing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution of the arts and creative sector, with a focus on exports
- increasing the median income for creative professionals so that it more closely matches the median income for New Zealanders earning a wage or salary.

Creative industries need a focused Industry Skills Board to ensure that improvements made through the work of the Toi Mai Workforce Development Agency can be progressed, and so creative industries can be supported to deliver on the Government's wider vision for the creative and cultural sectors (noting the final strategy has yet to be released).

No clear transition plan to appropriately support vocational education and training for creative industries post the disestablishment of the Workforce Development Councils

There is no clear transition plan for how creative industries' vocational education and training needs will be appropriately supported once Toi Mai is disestablished.

Creative New Zealand is concerned that the shift to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority will mean a loss in improvements to skills and workforce development planning that the arts, creative, cultural and ngā toi Māori sectors and industries have seen through Toi Mai, including work with industry leaders and mātanga toi to develop and embed new work-based learning approaches.

4. Do you have any feedback relating to a specific industry (and which)?

Creative New Zealand is providing feedback based on our experience of the vocational education and training needs of the arts, cultural and creative industries, including ngā toi Māori and Pacific arts.

Creative industries contributed \$17.5 billion to New Zealand's economy (4.2 percent of GDP) in 2024. They generated \$4.1 billion in export revenue and supported over 117,912 people in primary employment in the arts and creative sector.¹

Creative New Zealand recommends the creation of an **eighth Industry Skills Board** dedicated to emerging industries, including the creative and digital technology industries.

This Board would help ensure that the vocational education and training system:

- delivers high-quality qualifications and standards that align with the evolving needs of the creative industries
- reflects and recognises the unique characteristics and of the creative workforce, which is predominantly self-employed and demographically diverse – notably, 30.3 percent of individuals with primary employment in the arts and culture sector are self-employed, nearly double the rate of the overall economy (15.5 percent)²
- conducts research and strategic workforce planning in collaboration with creative industry leaders and sector stakeholders to inform future skills development
- provides evidence-based investment advice to the Tertiary Education Commission and other government agencies
- supports the long-term sustainability and growth of these vital industries, contributing to New Zealand's cultural and economic prosperity.

5. If your industry is covered by one of the seven Industry Skills Boards, how supportive are you of the decision to assign your industry to that Industry Skills Board?

The arts, cultural, creative and ngā toi Māori sectors and creative industries are not covered by an Industry Skills Board.

6. If you don't support the current Industry Skills Board allocation for your industry which Industry Skills Board, would you prefer?

Not applicable.

7. If your industry is proposed to be shifted to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, how supportive are you of this proposal?

Creative New Zealand does not support the proposal for creative industries to be shifted to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

¹ Infometrics Arts and Creative Sector Profile 2024. [Arts and Creative Sector economic profiles 2024 | Manatū Taonga | Ministry for Culture & Heritage](#)

² Ibid.

Without an Industry Skills Board for creative industries, our sectors will not be able to participate effectively in the vocational education and training system, with a loss of creative industry leadership in:

- research, data and insights
- workforce planning and development of future structured training pathways
- programme development and endorsement
- investment advice to the Tertiary Education Commission.

8. If you don't support the proposal for NZQA to oversee your industry, which of the seven Industry Skills Boards would you prefer to be aligned with?

Creative New Zealand would prefer that the creative and digital technology industries have their own Industry Skills Board that can develop appropriate, high-quality vocational education and training pathways, working with industry leaders across the sector.

9. You indicated that your sector is not covered by an Industry Skills Board or NZQA in the proposal. Which from the seven Industry Skills Boards would be most appropriate for your industry?

Not applicable.

Who we are

Creative New Zealand is the national arts development agency of Aotearoa New Zealand, responsible for delivering government support for the arts. We currently invest approximately \$60 million per annum in the arts sector.

We support the following artforms through our funding and development programmes: Craft and object art; Dance; Literature; Music and Opera; Nga toi Māori, including customary Māori arts; Pacific arts, including Pacific heritage arts; Theatre; Visual arts; and Multidisciplinary arts.

We're an autonomous Crown entity operating under the [Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014](#). Our purpose is: *to encourage, promote, and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders.*

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss this submission further.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa, nā

David Pannett
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Pou Whakahaere Matua, Rautaki me te Tūhono