

Submission to the Tertiary Education Commission – Workforce Development Councils

October 2019

Background

WeCreate is the alliance of New Zealand’s creative industries with the mission to grow the creative sector’s contribution to New Zealand’s social and economic wellbeing. WeCreate’s member organisations represent content creators and owners across the spectrum of the creative industries from screen, to interactive and books, visual arts, advertising, music, performing arts, design, photography, fashion and architecture. In addition to our Members, large businesses and government agencies in the New Zealand creative sector are Friends of WeCreate. Together our Members and Friends represent over 25,000 individual creators and creative businesses.

In 2016, WeCreate commissioned NZIER to prepare *The Evolution of Kiwi Innovation*. This report demonstrated that kiwi creativity drives jobs and economic growth, not only in the creative industries, but increasingly as a key enabler of other sectors.

The New Zealand creative sector:

- **Enriches the lives of all New Zealanders** through our ideas, and our stories of people and place
- Brings fresh thinking and new solutions to **help Kiwis thrive**
- Is at the forefront of **technological innovation**
- Drives **growth** in the digital age through **innovation and productivity, diversifying** our output and exports beyond traditional industries
- Generates **high value jobs and outputs** – not just in the creative industries, but **in every sector**
- Fosters the skills and talent we will need to confidently face the **Future of Work**
- Offers new opportunities for **small business and regional development**
- Is sustainable and **kind to the environment, helping to meet emissions targets**
- **Exports globally**, growing trade weightlessly and with few barriers

In the past two years, WeCreate has consulted widely in the development of an Action Plan to grow our creative sector for the good of all New Zealanders. The comments made here are informed by that process, which has involved over 200 creative industry leaders and government officials, and included the establishment of six Working Groups comprising industry experts, one of which is dedicated to Skills, Talent & Capability.

It was announced on 2 July 2019 that the creative sector would be recognised in NZ for the first time as an economic contributor in the [Industry Transformation Plans](#), and that from 2020 the government will ‘partner with industry body WeCreate on the implementation of key recommendations from its Action Plan’.

WeCreate’s Action Plan includes recommendations to:

- Better connect our creative industries for growth - with each other, with government, with Māori, with other industries, and with the world.
- Enhance the profile and potential of our creative sector; and creativity as an enabler of economic, cultural and social wellbeing.

- More accurately measure, and track, the value and potential of our creative sector.
- Enable accelerated growth in the capability, capacity, and export potential of our creative people and businesses.
- Support our creators' ability to derive value from their work.

Submission prepared by Paula Browning
 Chair, WeCreate Inc
paula@wecreate.org.nz

Submission

General

1. WeCreate's goal is for New Zealand creators to be able to make a sustainable living from their work, and for creative businesses to thrive, and welcomes the TEC recommendation for a Creative Industries Workforce Development Council.
2. Creativity is essentially human, and while creativity is increasingly being combined with technology to produce high value goods and services, we can be reasonably confident that creative jobs will be less susceptible than many others to being automated out of existence.
3. Creative skills, like technology skills, are horizontal – they impact all businesses and careers to some extent already, and are expected to intensify their impact in the future. Creative talent will increasingly be required by other sectors, yet the creative industries are not yet well represented in Future of Work and other employment policy development.
4. Growing the number of successful creators and creative businesses, especially as exporters of IP, will in turn support new creative practitioners and our Arts & Culture.
5. There has not previously been a specific ITO/workforce development organisation for the sector, and the needs of 21st century creative industries may not previously have been represented in discussions relating to this Review.
6. There are many challenges in developing a sustainable creative career in New Zealand, as demonstrated in the recent Creative NZ/NZ On Air report [A Profile of Creative Professionals](#).
7. WeCreate's proposed Action Plan recommends the facilitation of greater collaboration between creative tertiary educators, and between educators and industry. In 2018 WeCreate convened a pilot group of creative tertiary educators (including polytechnics, universities and PTEs) in Auckland with regard to this. This group is now expanding to other regions and is currently planning to formalise its membership and strategy.
8. The UK is the world leader in transforming its creative economy, via an industry-government partnership. Since the launch of the [UK strategy](#) six years ago, their creative sector has grown at

nearly twice the rate of the rest of the economy, increasing creative exports by 84% and creative sector employment by 30%.

9. Recognising the need for a skilled workforce to sustain this growth, the UK Creative Industries Federation, Creative Industries Council (the industry-government partnership) and several skills development providers have recently joined forces in The [Creative Careers Programme](#) to raise awareness of the opportunities for work in the creative sector, and provide the training and development to help cultivate a workforce fit for the future.
10. In 2018 NESTA and The Creative Industries Federation UK published [figures](#) relating to the future of work that showed that the growth in occupations by 2024 would be **5.3% in the creative industries**, 5.1% in STEM industries and 2.5% overall.
11. The Australian Bureau of Arts & Communications' paper (Jan 2019) on "[Creative Skills for the Future Economy](#)" also contains research, data and conclusions which support the importance of creative skills in the Future of Work.
12. Success in the creative sector comes in many forms – sole practitioners, freelancers, agency or studio teams and publishers can all be successful career paths or businesses. As we move towards a 'gig' economy, the sustainability of our solo and small businesses will be vital to a productive, sustainable and inclusive New Zealand.
13. Several different kinds of capability are required to build prosperous creative careers and businesses:
 - Creative – an artist's skill in their chosen discipline
 - Business – management, finance, compliance, marketing skills
 - Industry – understanding of industry-specific practices, dynamics and business models
 - Governance – strategic planning and risk management
 - Confidence
14. Creative practitioners and businesses may need to develop these capabilities at different stages of their maturity. Whilst these skills should be part of creative industry tertiary qualifications, creative businesses may also need to develop them as part of life-long learning when the need arises. This should be supported by capability building in the ecosystem including education, professional development opportunities and industry association activities.
15. We look forward to the outcomes of the Ministry for Culture & Heritage's *Supporting Sustainable Cultural Careers* work programme and encourage the TEC to engage with MCH on this, as well as the NZQA review of 26 creative qualifications.
16. New Zealand's creative skills are world-class. While business and governance skills exist locally, commercial ambition can be lacking. Having said this, there are many mature creative businesses with strong capabilities but without the resources or market opportunity to go global or fully commercialise their IP.
17. A variety of capability and capacity building programmes exist within the sector, and are available internationally, but they vary in quality and accessibility.

TEC's Specific Questions

How should industries be grouped under WDCs?

18. Creative career paths and prospects are interdependent with a vibrant Arts & Culture sector and share strong similarities with those in:
 - Technology – most creative industries are already highly digital
 - Sports & recreation – due to the number of solo practitioners and volunteers
19. As the creative industries have not previously had a specific ITO, there is no historic evidence upon which to base judgement around groupings.
20. The creative sector is a complex and evolving ecosystem (please see diagram below) and the current and future workforce development needs of its practitioners and employers differ from those of more traditional sectors in some respects.
21. WeCreate has only had the opportunity to engage with TEC on this matter within the past three weeks, and whilst we have made best efforts to engage our membership with the TEC process, there has been very little time in which to do so to the extent we would have preferred.
22. As previously mentioned, Skills, Talent and Capability, alongside Education, will be a core component of the forthcoming Industry Transformation Plan for the sector and we submit that it would be astute to align Workforce Development with the ITP.
23. WeCreate strongly submits that as creative skills become increasingly important across all employment and industries, a comprehensive and future-focused consultation process on the formation and grouping of the Workforce Development Council for the sector is undertaken by TEC with WeCreate, industry, cultural agencies, creative educators and other experts. WeCreate would be happy to offer assistance in facilitating such consultation.

What governance structure is right for industry – representative, skills based or a mix?

WeCreate submits that a governance structure should be determined once a grouping is decided. It should be noted that, due to the high level of self-employment in the sector, effective engagement and representation is likely to be achieved via the various industry membership associations.

WeCreate's Questions

How does the Reform of Vocational Education and establishment of the proposed Workforce Development Councils align with the government's other employment programmes, such as:

- Future of Work
- The Digital Skills Forum
- Ministry of Culture and Heritage and Creative NZ's 'Sustainable Creative Careers' projects?

The Creative Sector

