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9 April 2020

In the weeks since the pandemic began to affect New Zealand, WeCreate has been listening to and engaging with, our members and others in the creative industries - and with the sector's input has formulated a **Plan for our Recovery & Renewal that can be started now.**

The Aotearoa NZ creative sector counts more than ever. Creative people are often the first to offer innovative solutions in a crisis – and their skills, talent and ingenuity remain among the most powerful tools NZ has to propel our economic recovery from COVID-19, and to play a leading role in a swift return to wellbeing and prosperity for all of Aotearoa.

With many people in the creative sector now in crisis themselves, we believe a few easily-executed and low-cost actions can strengthen and renew our creative economy for a thriving future.

We therefore ask that government
FAST-TRACK A CREATIVE SECTOR RECOVERY & RENEWAL PLAN
To support economic recovery across our sector and help us to boost our future contribution to
New Zealand's wellbeing and prosperity.

Priorities:

1. Support work, jobs and businesses, including access to government packages.
2. Unite and collaborate to deliver economies of scale and higher quality outcomes.
3. Pivot to digital – propel the implementation of new monetised business models, meet the anticipated global demand for content, and share innovation knowledge and networks.

First Steps:

1. Mandate relevant Ministries and agencies¹ to unite with WeCreate to deliver this Plan.
2. Support additional capacity in WeCreate to do the majority of the advisory and coordination work on this Plan - and in due course, to develop an Industry Transformation Plan that will support the recovery of the wider economy.

COVID-19 has already devastated many parts of the creative economy, particularly the self-employed creators and small businesses who make up our vast majority, but it has also boosted and revealed some opportunities.

Several creative industries were among the very first to be affected by COVID-19. Lockdown for the public-facing entertainment and event industries, and those who work in large groups, such as screen production, began up to four weeks before the Level 4 lock-down.

Our industries operate globally and restrictions on inbound and outbound travel will impact many of those industries for some time. Many of the export impacts on our creative industries began in early March - they are now in their second month of lockdown.

In common with tourism and export education, New Zealand's 'isolation' approach to COVID-19 generates both vulnerabilities for our industries reliant on public contact and international travel, as well as opportunities for

¹ MBIE, MCH, MFAT, NZTE, MSD, MoE, Immigration NZ, NZ Film Commission, NZ on Air, Education NZ, Creative NZ, TEC, NZ Music Commission, Callaghan Innovation, EDNZ.

leveraging digital trade, growing our domestic markets, and with the right precautions, eventually providing a risk-mitigated 'safe haven' for international visitors and producers.

New Zealand needs a greater diversity of sectors contributing more to our economy to fill gaps left by the pandemic. We are ready to get working on the creative sector's 'shovel ready' projects now.

Innovation & Diversification

The impact of COVID-19 on our sector has revealed some opportunities for innovation allowing the creative sector to contribute to wider economic recovery – and do it quickly.

- Our industries are all digital to some extent, some almost entirely.
- Export markets will soon be hungry for creative content, especially digital content.
- The creative industries were among the first to use digital technology to produce work, and to use the internet as a marketing and distribution platform.
- The convergence of creativity and technology has produced new business models to commercialise creative content.
- We can **play to our strengths** and rapidly **pivot to grow productivity in what we can do**, to replace what we can't, or will not be able to for some time.

One of our greatest opportunities for both rebuilding now (reducing dependence on emergency government support), and for our eventual growth, lies in digital.

We know how to do digital, and, with support and investment, we can do more of it.

A committed, concerted and coordinated partnership approach between industry and government to fortify and grow the creative sector has been more than [proven in the UK](#), where their creative sector strategy has seen the sector's Gross Value Added contribution increase by 60.5% in eight years to £111.7bn, and creative exports double between 2014 and 2018.

NZIER estimated the NZ creative sector's GDP contribution in 2016 at \$17.5bn, employing 131,000 people

Data

WeCreate is working with our industry organisations, MBIE, MCH, MFAT, and the major cultural agencies, to gather and collate data on the human and economic impact of the pandemic on our sector. Some industries have been fast to activate data gathering, whilst others face challenges in organisation and know-how. We hope to have a more comprehensive estimate of the immediate economic impact on the sector soon.

Collaboration

Individual creative industries are banding together to support their people and businesses through these unprecedented times, and to prepare for the future. Some of their responses and requests for government assistance will be particular to their own needs and opportunities (which this Plan does not intend to substitute), but many of their issues and opportunities are shared across the sector, and it is these that WeCreate is focussing on. **There will be economies of scale, and advantages of quality and effectiveness, in working together .**

WeCreate counts the major screen and interactive industry associations among its founders and members. We have been closely connected with the Screen Sector Strategy 2030, and support the Interactive Aotearoa report. **We are working alongside the Screen Sector COVID-19 Action Group (SSCAG) and Interactive Aotearoa (IA)** in developing our responses to the pandemic. The creative sector is an ecosystem of industries which often intersect, and all of the creative industries intersect with screen and interactive in some way. Whilst developing this Plan we have been mindful that several of the initiatives we each recommend will have crossover. Our firm intention is to work together in a system of strong collaboration, cooperation, and sharing – to both maximise our combined impact, and to avoid duplication. **We all believe that our strength will lie in teamwork.**

How do we get started?

This is not a request for a large financial investment. We propose an investment in cooperation, and new ways for government to work strategically with industry, to propel the recovery and transformative potential of our sector.

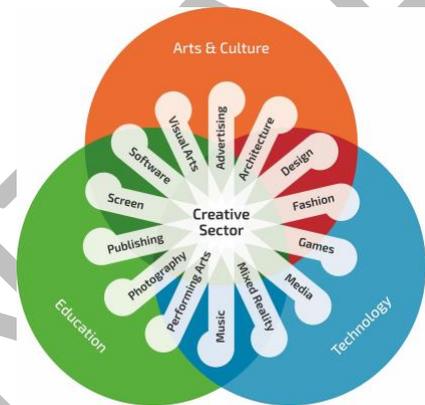
WeCreate cannot estimate the full cost of implementing this Recovery & Renewal Plan within government, although we do not think it would be significant, but we are seeking an investment from Budget 2020 to 30 June 2021, to enable industry to effectively manage the initiatives outlined below.

With government support and a mandate for action we can **revitalise and advance New Zealand's creative sector** at a time when all of **Aotearoa New Zealand** needs creativity and economic diversity more than ever.

Ngā mihi nui,
Nāku nā,



Paula Browning
Chair



WeCreate's Members & Friends are:

Advertising & Illustrative Photographers Assn
Australia & NZ Screen Association
CCLI
Commercial Communications Council
Directors & Editors Guild NZ
Designco
Interactive Games & Entertainment Assn
Mindful Fashion NZ
Music Managers Forum NZ
NZ Film Commission
NZ Institute of Architects
NZ Music Commission
NZ Screen Association
NZ Writers Guild
Playmarket
Publishers Association of NZ
SAE Institute
Screenrights
Screen Production and Development Assn
Weta Group

APRA AMCOS NZ
ATEED
Copyright Licensing NZ
Creative NZ
Design Assembly
Home Entertainment Association NZ
Independent Music NZ
Motion Picture Distributors Association
NZ Comedy Trust
NZ Games Developers Association
NZ Institute of Professional Photography
NZ On Air
NZ Society of Authors
Performing Arts Network NZ
Print Media Copyright Agency
Recorded Music NZ
Script to Screen
Sky Network Television
TVNZ

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CREATIVE SECTOR RECOVERY & RENEWAL PLAN – OUTLINE

KEY:

Funded by investment in additional capacity for WeCreate.

Programme costs funded by government. Managed within expanded WeCreate.

Funded by government – existing or new programmes.

ACTION	OUTCOMES & RATIONALE
<p>Resource</p> <p>Add capacity to WeCreate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a data & research role (to link the sector to existing MBIE/MCH work programme) • Focus on people & programmes for jobs, capability building, and collaboration • Enhance digital capability, investment and collaborations • Improve communications – with government, the public, and within the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralised contact and coordination function between industry and government (Ministries and agencies). • Government has easy access to sector experts’ advice for policy development on the issues and opportunities affecting the sector - this is already happening on an ad hoc basis but is not scalable in the face of increasing demand on WeCreate for advice and connections due to COVID-19 (NB: WeCreate’s current resource is 0.5 FTE) • Better information sharing and collaboration across the sector, and with government. • New ways of working, and innovative business models, that quickly respond to new market environments.
<p>Establish government secretariat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Senior pan-Ministerial Plan Manager – (equivalent to David Downs’ role for the Agritech ITP). • Operational team/s in MBIE and other Ministries as their priorities allow. • Form Creative Ministerial Accord – (similar to the Construction Accord) in due course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government is more ‘joined-up’ in a strategic approach with the creative sector – Economic Development, Arts & Culture, Trade, Education, Broadcasting and Digital Media, Immigration, Social Development, Commerce & Consumer Affairs.

<p>Business and Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with designated officials at MSD and MBIE to ensure continuing and relevant support. (There were some initial eligibility problems with the Wage Subsidy for creative sector freelancers and small businesses which we were grateful to see resolved swiftly.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-employed creators and creative businesses are able to access relevant and ongoing government support. ● Self-employed creators and creative businesses are considered and represented in all government programmes concerning economic development, innovation, regional development, employment, and training and business development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activate sharing and collaboration across the sector, through transferrable skills and joint projects. ● Coordinate and invest in campaigns to encourage Kiwis (and incentivise local media and producers) to 'buy, experience and play NZ made', and to grow confidence in attending gatherings and public performances when alert levels allow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The domestic market for creative products and services is restored as quickly as possible, and opportunities for growth are optimised.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish and manage a sector-wide worker redeployment database in conjunction with industry, MBIE and MSD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Un(and under)-employed creatives are redeployed to other industries, and other sectors, where viable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build on and adapt existing industry internship programmes (NZ Music Commission and ATEED/MSD Screen) for application in other industries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More young people are able to access, and earn from, creative jobs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a 'health passport/visa' with agencies and Immigration NZ for international producers and artists to travel to, and from, NZ when NZ alert levels and international circumstances allow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International production, events and touring resume under strict health & safety controls.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop Health & Safety guidelines for relevant industries (underway for Screen) – share knowledge and information across the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International production, events and touring resume under strict health & safety controls.
<p>Capability Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a sector-wide programme for enhancing business skills and mentoring (including online) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governance ○ Financial ○ Compliance ○ Marketing ○ Monetising content and services online. ● Unite and coordinate upskilling initiatives across all industries where relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative careers and businesses are more resilient, productive, and sustainable. ● More creative businesses become 'investment-ready'

<p>Measure, analyse and inform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fast-track data gathering and analysis in association with MBIE, MCH, MFAT, Stats NZ and others. ● Research and explore emerging business models and how best to apply them in NZ. ● Map existing capability development programmes (industry and government), identify best practice, gaps, overlaps and areas where collaboration might build quality and quantity in association with MBIE, MCH and Education (NZQA/TEC). ● Implement system for ongoing information sharing with the sector, and with government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better understanding of the scale, nature, and potential of the impact of COVID-19 on our creative sector. ● A robust and ongoing measurement model for the sector to provide a reliable evidence-base for decision making and future planning.
<p>Regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Address creative sector concerns with the revised objectives for the Copyright Act Review and the accompanying MBIE paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The process and objectives for the Review better align with the needs of our creative sector to manage the work they create and to earn from their creative rights. ● The Review takes account of and aligns with other government policy work including the eventual Industry Transformation Plan.
<p>Innovation, Investment & Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with creative businesses, content funders, private investors and media on new types of investment and business models, especially in the digital world, that could be shared across the sector, and with other sectors. ● Establish ongoing connection with the Digital Council for Aotearoa NZ. <p><i>(WeCreate is already participating in a collective of highly successful Kiwi creative entrepreneurs which is exploring new ways of working, using their combined strengths to develop new products and services).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversify NZ's economy to overcome gaps left as industries recover post COVID-19. ● Creative technology is applied to bolster and enhance other industries eg. education, tourism, healthcare, aged care. ● Propel growth in industries who are optimising contemporaneous opportunities and make their skills and networks available to help others.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a public-private partnership Creative Technology Incubator programme. ● Modelled on the MBIE-funded and Callaghan Innovation-run Technology Incubator Programme, which was reviewed and renewed in 2019. ● This combines private investment and expertise with repayable government loans. Several investors have already expressed interest in this model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More commercially sustainable and scalable creative businesses. ● Private sector investment and expertise is attracted to investment-ready creative IP businesses. ● Government contributions can be recouped through repayable loans while making further investment rounds attractive. ● A 'venture studio' model is encouraged - where investors contribute valuable industry expertise such as international partnerships in addition to funding. ● A pathway is created for Creative Innovation Fund projects, NZFC-supported producers and other investment-ready creative businesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a Creative Innovation Fund. Contestable grants (in two tiers of up to \$60,000 and \$300,000) for business capability and product development for creative IP businesses. Structured creative innovation, design-thinking and commercialisation potential would be key criteria. These criteria are not currently eligible for Callaghan Innovation or other innovation grants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More creative IP businesses are ready for investment and to take advantage of digital and export opportunities. ● A pipeline for the Creative Technology Incubators (as above) is created. ● Gaps between existing government programmes are filled - encouraging innovation and collaboration in the creative sector. ● Education, health and social enterprise projects could also be supported.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a comprehensive venue and events support programme, working with local government, the commercial sector, industry bodies and others, focused around re-invigorating now dormant spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Venues and event spaces are supported to re-open in a safe and sustainable way, and barriers to hire (eg. commercial imposed on community groups) are significantly reduced. ● New Zealanders are encouraged to return to performances and events and attendance numbers post-COVID 19 show steady upwards progression.
<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with MoE, Creative NZ, NZ Society of Authors, and NZ Music Commission to rapidly expand Creatives in Schools, Writers in Schools, and Music Mentoring in Schools, including using technology to connect creatives into remote learning programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhance the creative skills and wellbeing of students and teachers, and grow the creators, audiences and consumers of the future. ● More creatives are employed in the education sector, or as one part of a portfolio career of creative work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with TEC to review the proposed Workforce Development Councils coverage - and implement an 'Innovation' WDC of creative, cultural and tech. ● Work with TEC to include more future-focussed and design thinkers on the WDC Design and Reference Groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vocational education is future-focussed to meet the needs of learners, workers, and businesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to work with CreaTer – the national alliance of creative tertiary educators, facilitated by WeCreate, who have developed a MoU to jointly collaborate with industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tertiary educators and industry are better connected to ensure fit-for-purpose and future-focussed tertiary education.

<p>Exports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team up with NZTE, MFAT and other relevant agencies on a 'blank page' export sub-strategy and Task Force to support and grow creative sector exports, especially digital exports most resilient to international trade disruption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZ significantly diversifies its export portfolio. • NZ is less dependent on a few traditional industries, and a few export markets, and is more resilient to international trade disruption. • MFAT and NZTE develop a greater understanding of the export potential and needs of the creative sector, particularly in SMEs, digital and global B2C. • Trade agreements accurately reflect the issues and opportunities of creative sector exporters. • Export support programmes are implemented or adapted to meet the needs of creative sector export potential.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Screen and Sound and cultural agencies to more proactively respond to global opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZ successfully competes in meeting the anticipated global demand for creative content.
<p>Value and support our arts & culture, and media partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lives of all New Zealanders are enriched through our ideas, and our stories of people and place.
<p>Develop Industry Transformation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the situation improves sufficiently, facilitate consultation with industry and government on the longer term ITP, including addressing the regional, and the Māori creative economy's, issues and opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-informed and agile Industry Transformation Plan for the sector to sustain recovery and renewal, based on a number of scenarios; and longer-term to expand the creative sector's contribution to overall economic recovery, wellbeing and future growth.