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On behalf of:

UNIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP SUBMISSION – PHASE 2

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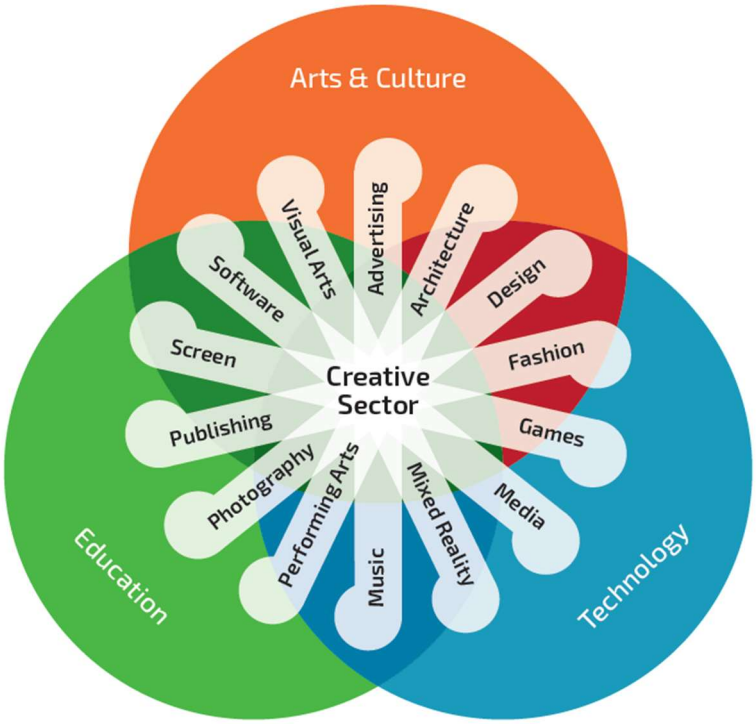
BACKGROUND

WeCreate is the alliance of Aotearoa's major creative industry associations and organisations (representing 30,000+ Kiwi creators, support people, and creative businesses), which was founded in 2014 to propel growth in the sector and increase its contribution to New Zealand's social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

The creative economy contributes $16b[1] to New Zealand's GDP and, with the right policy settings, could be worth $25b by 2030. Our sector is an ecosystem and much of the talent we have is fostered in and by arts and culture organisations, as shown in the diagram below.



In 2016, prior to the Ministry for Culture and Heritage commencing publication of its Arts & Creative Sector Economic Profiles, WeCreate commissioned NZIER to produce a valuation of the creative sector which estimated employment at 131,000 people – **one third of whom work outside the creative industries**. This is important information in the context of this consultation. Not all graduates of creative education join the creative workforce. **Creative skills, like tech skills, are needed across the entire workforce**.

Hon Paul Goldsmith, Minister for Arts, Culture & Heritage is currently developing a national stategy to grow the creative sector. The Minister has stated that he has ambitious goals for the sector's economic and export growth – these will not be achievable without a creative workforce which has the skills and knowledge required to deliver this potential.

[1] Arts and Creative Sector economic profiles 2023 | Manatū Taonga | Ministry for Culture & Heritage (mch.govt.nz)

SUBMISSION TO QUESTION 7.

Are the universities matching their range of teaching and research disciplines to New Zealand's current and future needs? In what ways could the system better identify and plan for future needs?

The growing emphasis on STEM[2] disciplines at most New Zealand universities (as opposed to STEAM[3]), and the decline in student enrolments for Arts & Humanities, are barriers to meeting the educational needs of New Zealand's future workforce.

The World Economic Forum 'Future of Jobs' 2023 report states that surveyed organisations rated ***Creative Thinking*** as the number one 'skill on the rise', with Technology Literacy at number 3.

The WEF report also states:

Analytical thinking and creative thinking remain the most important skills for workers in 2023. Analytical thinking is considered a core skill by more companies than any other skill and constitutes, on average, 9% of the core skills reported by companies. Creative thinking, another cognitive skill, ranks second, ahead of three self-efficacy skills – resilience, flexibility and agility; motivation and self-awareness; and curiosity and lifelong learning – in recognition of the importance of workers ability to adapt to disrupted workplaces.

In the UK the Creative Industries are a success story. Between 2011 – 2019, the sector grew at double the rate of the UK economy, and since 2015 has created 400,000 additional jobs. This success relied on a workforce of talented and motivated creative people, who had the right skills for the right roles. However, the UK creative economy is at risk of falling into a looming skills shortage.

In July 2024 the UK Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre (PEC) published a Creative Further Education report, which looks at student participation in creative further education (FE) across all four UK nations, and shows that there is a severe drop in participation. Creative FE enrolments are declining in all parts of the UK, and at a faster rate than average across all subject disciplines. As demand for creative skills grows, it is not being met by increased participation in creative learning. This indicates that there is a workforce pipeline shortage for the UK's growing creative economy, and for the creative skills required elsewhere in the economy.

The Ministry for Culture & Heritage's Arts & Creative Sector Profile 2023 estimates that New Zealand's creative economy is generating $16.3bn in GDP and employing 117,517 people, and expects to add 10,000 new jobs in the next five years. The sector has been growing at twice the rate of the rest of the NZ economy, yet this growth faces the same risk as the UK is experiencing, as enrolments in creative disciplines decline, and universities de-emphasise teaching and research of these disciplines.

In 2018 the UK PEC was forecasting in its 'Creativity and the Future of Skills' report that creative skills and occupations are likely to become more important than ever in the future job market, and not only in the creative industries. The report states that:

1. Creativity is likely to be even more important in the future job market.

Although it may seem ubiquitous, far from every job advert requests 'creativity' as a requirement. In fact, job adverts for Creative Occupations in the DCMS's official list are still far more likely to ask for it. Strikingly, jobs asking for creativity are also far more likely to grow as a percentage of the workforce by the year 2030. This

[2] Science Technology Engineering Maths
[3] Science Technology Engineering Arts Maths

reinforces the finding from previous research that policymakers should be investing in the workforce's creative skills.

2. Employers don't just value creativity alone: they need talent with project management and organisational skills too.

Our analysis suggests that strong project management and organisational skills when combined with creativity will be a particularly potent mix in the future. This should be a key takeaway for anyone involved in training or education policy.

3. Creative occupations don't have a monopoly on creativity.

Creativity is not confined to the list of creative occupations compiled by the DCMS. Education and skills policymakers, should look beyond sectoral boundaries when formulating policies to invest in the workforce's creativity.

Jobs for which employers request creativity at a similar rate as those in the DCMS list include: Florists, Print finishing and binding workers, Bakers and flour confectioners, Chefs, Hairdressers and barbers.

We also find jobs that have a lot in common with Creative Occupations due to the technical skills required. Examples of these jobs include engineers, manufacturing and business development roles. This is something for the Department for Education and other skills leads to consider when developing reskilling policies.

The Case for a STEAM Approach (Science Technology Engineering Maths **+ ARTS**)

Research for NESTA – a leading UK innovation agency – found compelling evidence to suggest that firms combining arts and science skills are more likely to grow, are more productive, and more likely to produce radical innovations. These firms achieved 6% higher employment growth and 8% higher sales growth, with evidence showing "that the broader set of skills a firm uses, the higher it's level of innovative performance and future growth".

New Zealand's Ministry of Education advises schools that "STEAM learning applies meaningful maths, science, and technology content to solve real-world problems through hands-on learning activities and creative design." STEAM education develops students' innovative problem-solving abilities, which is what employers are looking for, and also what entrepreneurial start-ups need.

In the early 2010's, Stanford University recognised the need to educate for multi-faceted and diverse mind-sets that possess not only strong technical ability, but also the interpersonal skills and creative and innovative thinking sought by employers. This can be partially attributed to the success of some of the university's alumni that includes the founders of Google, Netflix, Instagram and PayPal. This approach is has evolved in recent years to be know as The Ways. The programme supports students to develop different ways of doing and thinking, beyond the ones that are "typical" in their chosen study field. This approach has been explored by the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation which found that Arts graduates are more likely than others to be involved in product innovation.

Creative Skills & AI/Emerging Technologies

The OECD records that "*Cultural and creative sectors are an often-overlooked driver of development. However, they generate economic wealth, create jobs, and spur innovation, as well as making places more attractive to live, work and invest in.*"

The role of those with creative skills working outside the creative industries is also recognised by the OECD : "*They also contribute to innovation in other sectors of the economy through the services they provide (such*

as design and advertising), and as a source of new ideas. As such, we can think of CCS businesses as providing outputs which are themselves innovative and also providing outputs which become inputs into the innovation activities of other businesses. In this way, CCS function as an important component of regional innovation systems and countries across the OECD are therefore increasingly focused on how they can leverage CCS to boost innovation and productivity in their countries, cities and regions."

In a world where technology development is moving at a faster pace (and reach) than it ever has, the value and importance of human creativity is, and will be, less about technical skills and even more about new ideas in terms of concepts, branding and strategy. As technology, such as Generative Artificial Intelligence, automates more aspects of creative work, human-centric skills will become increasingly valuable. In addition to this, the ability to understand and connect with people on an emotional level, think critically, solve complex problems, and generate truly original ideas are skills that AI cannot easily replicate. These skills will be essential in ALL sectors of the New Zealand economy.

WeCreate's Members and Friends are:

Advertising & Illustrative Photographers Assn

APRA AMCOS NZ

Australia & NZ Screen Association

Christian Copyright Licensing International

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Commercial Communications Council

Copyright Licensing NZ

Creative NZ

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Music Managers Forum NZ

NZ Comedy Trust

NZ Film Commission

NZ Game Developers Association

NZ Institute of Architects

NZ Institute of Professional Photography

NZ Music Commission

NZ On Air

NZ Society of Authors

NZ Writers Guild

Playmarket

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