

## Feedback on Proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift

### Purpose of this consultation:

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is seeking the views of international production companies and domestic stakeholders on proposed amendments to the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate - International 5% Uplift (Production Rebate 5% Uplift). These amendments follow sector feedback, and the reduction of the Qualifying New Zealand Production Expenditure eligibility threshold which came into effect on 1 January 2026.

The intention of these amendments is to create a simpler points test that reflects how productions operate, while maintaining the intent of the Production Rebate 5% Uplift: to support high value screen activity in New Zealand which provides additional benefits for our country and sector.

We are inviting input on whether the proposed settings are clear, practical, and aligned with current production realities. You can refer to the existing Production Rebate 5% Uplift [here](#).

Please return your feedback form to [screenenquiries@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:screenenquiries@mbie.govt.nz) by **midday, Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026**.

### WeCreate Inc – Background to feedback

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 prosperity. The creative economy contributes \$17.5b<sup>1</sup> to New Zealand's GDP and, with the right policy settings, could be worth \$25b by 2030<sup>2</sup>. 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.

Activity in the screen sector, including international productions, has an impact on the wider creative ecosystem. The sector's workforce is dominated by freelancers and contractors, many of whom work across the ecosystem, not solely in one industry. This means that policy and investment changes in one industry can impact the whole sector.

We submit that this is the case with skills and talent development as set out in the Rebate. Experience gained during international productions are **valuable for developing talent in multiple disciplines across the sector**. The investment in the SPR is significant and the opportunity to ensure benefits are derived for the local workforce across the whole sector is critical.



<sup>1</sup> [Arts and creative sector profile 2024 - Infometrics report summary](#)

<sup>2</sup> [WeCreate-Creative-Export-Explainer-March-2025-FINAL.pdf](#)

**Please answer the following questions:**

1. Will the proposed changes make the Production Rebate 5% Uplift simpler to understand and apply for compared to the existing [Production Rebate 5% Uplift](#)? Please provide details where relevant.

The model is proposed to be simplified by removing two categories but without taking the opportunity to more highly prioritise others. The SPR should contribute to the governments and the sector's wider goals, including sustainability of creative careers and the skilling and reskilling of the workforce that supports practitioners to stay up to date with new approaches to working and with new technologies.

The proposed removal of Māori participation mechanisms is concerning. The involvement of Māori in the creative workforce underpins the development of stories and storytelling that is unique to New Zealand. We need Māori to be prioritised and supported in every part of the creative ecosystem.

2. Do the proposed changes align more closely with production realities than the existing [Production Rebate 5% Uplift](#)? Please provide details where relevant.

The model does align more closely with some operational realities, however alignment should not be prioritised over the opportunity to provide the local industry with unique training opportunities that would otherwise not be available. WeCreate has been advocating for structural changes to the tertiary education system so that work-based-learning opportunities – such as those available during international productions – can be connected with the tertiary system for learning recognition and support. This is not different, from our perspective to existing work-based-learning models that, for example, electricians go through. The difference in the creative sector is that the work and experience is gained from contract work, not employment with one employer. The use of the incentives in the SPR is an ideal way of achieving this outcome for the creative workforce. We strongly recommend that MBIE consult with the ETITC ISB, Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission prior to finalising changes to the SPR.

3. Is the proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift appropriately achievable for smaller productions that are now eligible due to the lower Qualifying New Zealand Production Expenditure threshold, that came into effect on 1 January 2026? Please provide details where relevant.

The uplift on its own will not guarantee that smaller productions benefit. The means to support capability development still need to be enabled through the system so that smaller productions and emerging practitioners can benefit. Otherwise creative workers will continue to be restricted to entry-level roles, with limited career pathways.

4. Do you have any comments on how points are allocated across the proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift?

The allocation of points to skills, including outcomes for structured career pathways, capability building, and skill development should be greater – at least as high as the marketing category.

5. Are the point weightings in the proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift appropriate, proportional and reflective of the effort required from applicants? Please provide details where relevant.

No – skill development has long-term value to the local creative ecosystem and should be more heavily weighted than what is shown in the proposal.

6. Do you anticipate any unintended consequences from the proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift? If yes, please specify.

There is a risk that the NZ industry becomes a service provider for international productions rather than international productions becoming a valuable contributor to local industry skill development. There is also a risk in the removal of Māori participation diminishing cultural outcomes and reducing opportunities for Māori creative practitioners.

7. What sort of behaviours do you think the proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift could incentivise or disincentivise?

It is likely that investment in workforce development, infrastructure and innovation, Māori and cultural participation, and long-term capability building be disincentivised by the proposed approach. Investing in these areas will be at the whim of international producers rather than being part of the rules of engagement to qualify for the Rebate.

8. The proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift removes sections/criteria that have had low uptake or have not delivered sufficiently meaningful benefits to New Zealand. Their removal also simplifies and reduces the administrative complexity of the Production Rebate 5% Uplift. What are your views on the proposed removal of the following sections/criteria from the existing [Production Rebate 5% Uplift](#)?

- Section A: Sustainability
- Section E: Innovation and Infrastructure (*Note: E1 Transfer of Knowledge has been absorbed into D1 Seminars – Screen Industry*)
- B1: New Zealand Studio Lease
- C3: Māori

- C10: Lead Cast or Above-The-Line Crew is Māori
- F3: Tourism Marketing Partnership (*Note: now covered by E2 Bespoke marketing partnership with NZFC*)

There are a number of examples in current government policy where New Zealand takes a “light touch” approach which doesn’t necessarily ensure that New Zealand and New Zealanders are either protected from or fully benefit from an activity. Diluting the obligations of international productions in ways that are likely to have a negative impact on the country or our creative workforce is another example of this.

We do not support removing criteria for sustainability, innovation and infrastructure or Māori participation.

We note that the outcomes sought for tourism and marketing have no direct impact on the creative sector. These should not be prioritised at the expense of achieving outcomes for the sector and its workforce.

9. Do you foresee any practical challenges in utilising the proposed Production Rebate 5% Uplift in a real production environment? If yes, please specify.

The proposed model may result in poor outcomes in training and workforce development.

There are risks that training outcomes will be inconsistent and opportunities for progression will be limited

A production is unlikely to be able to effectively design and deliver training for workers. A joined-up approach is needed, including with the education organisations noted above.

10. Any other comments?

The SPR should be looked at through a lens of its potential impact on the whole of the New Zealand creative ecosystem. Without this there is a tangible risk of the opportunities that could be gained from the government’s in the SPR not being maximised.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.