

SUBMISSION TO STATS NZ LTIB
DECEMBER 2022

BACKGROUND

WeCreate is the alliance comprising forty 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 and economic wellbeing.

In 2016 WeCreate commissioned NZIER to produce a valuation of the creative sector which estimated its **contribution to GDP at \$17.5bn and employment at 131,000 people** – one third of whom work outside the creative industries. The following quote, taken from the NZIER Report, summarises our experience in relation to data and statistics about our sector in New Zealand:

Existing definitions and methods of measuring the economic impact of creativity in New Zealand do not take full account of the sector's dynamic, rapidly changing nature. Better data will allow everyone with a stake in the creative sector to better understand the scope and scale of the sector and its current and potential contribution to the economy and our well-being

WeCreate needed the NZIER report to be able to start a conversation with government about our sector. The government had never produced its own data and statistics on the whole creative sector, and data on the sector subset of arts and culture hadn't been produced since 2008.

The comments made here reflect WeCreate's experience over the past six years in compiling our own data about our sector, working with our members to understand how each creative industry compiles its own data, as well as – more recently – establishing a Creative Industries Data & Insights Working Group (comprising representatives from Manatū Taonga, MBIE, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and Toi Mai – the Workforce Development Council for Creative, Culture, Tech & Recreation sectors.) The purpose of the D&I Working Group is to provide industry guidance and connections as input for the various agency's own data and insights work programmes, and to help reduce duplication of work effort so as to make best use of limited human and financial resources.

A number of forward-thinking strategic imperatives have been undertaken across the creative sector in recent years, that are yet to be actioned by government. In 2019's *From the Knowledge Wave to the Digital Age*, government stated that it would partner with WeCreate on the key recommendations of its **Action Plan** (www.wecreate.org.nz), and also identified the **Review of the Copyright Act** and the **Screen Sector Strategy** (which has since incorporated a COVID-19 update, delivered in August 2020), as building blocks for a **Creative Industries Transformation Plan**. Prior to an indefinite delay of the Creative Industries Transformation Plan in June 2020, government (via MBIE) began to engage with the work of the **Interactive Aotearoa** initiative, and this work continues. This work, as with any policy changes or intervention measurement, requires data to understand and evidence the impact.

WeCreate's comprehensive two-year consultation process for its Action Plan identified **seven enduring pillars** (or components) required to grow the contribution of the sector to Aotearoa's wellbeing, and these remain widely supported across the sector:

Connection & Collaboration / **Measurement & Research** / Regulation
Education / Skills, Talent & Capability / Capacity & Investment / Export

A set of recommendations was developed by industry Working Groups for each pillar and these discussions included input from a range of officials from MCH, MBIE, MFAT, NZTE, MoE, TEC, Callaghan Innovation and Stats NZ.

WeCreate and our Interactive Media members have also been actively engaged with the Digital Industry Transformation Plan and Digital Aotearoa Strategy. The absence of fit-for-purpose data that keeps pace with technology development has been identified as a barrier to understanding Aotearoa's digital and digitally enabled sectors, as well as to measuring the impact of various government and industry interventions.

SUBMISSION

The creative industries have been at the forefront of technology development and use for many decades. Our experience enables us to make highly informed comment on data capture and data use, both at an international level and locally.

In our submission to the Data and Statistics Bill (made in December 2021 and **attached**) we noted that the current Act is not fit for purpose, including data that responds to the development of digital technology. We observed that the legislation needs to enable those responsible for delivering on the legislation's intent to be empowered to do so. We also stated that:

“As the responsible agency, StatsNZ should be required to engage, not just within government, but also with industry and sectors, to understand and inform the data and statistics needed in the short, medium and long-term future of the economy. In WeCreate's experience, this type of engagement and the mandate and resource for StatsNZ to be able to make changes to the data and statistics system as a result, does not currently exist.”

With this background we record our surprise that this LTIB, while stating in the introduction that Stats NZ is a “leader in data and analytics”, goes on to only consider possibilities for the *data ecosystem* in Aotearoa, and not the role that Stats NZ may, or should, have in that ecosystem. It is not the creative sector's experience that Stats NZ is currently supporting or facilitating data that is useful for either government or industry as it relates to being able to make data-informed decisions about us or for us. In the majority of our discussions with government the absence of data (or data that accurately represents the sector's current situation) arises as a barrier. The most recent example of this is the Review of Vocational Education (RoVE) that led to the establishment of Toi Mai. Where other sectors and industries were able to rely on data held in and by government relating to their workforce the creative sector, along with tech, could not.

Chart 1 on page 16 may further evidence the current situation with data on the creative and tech sectors where existing industry and occupation codes are not fit for purpose. The “ICT Sector” figures (assuming the chart is stating millions of dollars) are not reflective of the Tech Sector's own figures [2022 TIN Report Press Release | Technology Investment Network \(tin100.com\)](#). Equivalent numbers for the creative sector are not available, however the Interactive Media Sector's statistics are informative [NZ Interactive Media Industry Survey 2022 – NZGDA](#). With these two reports providing windows into the value of these digitally leading sectors, it is difficult to see how Chart 1 accurately reflects the innovation opportunity for Aotearoa.

We are pleased to see the LTIB acknowledge that data flows do not recognise borders. It is the creative sector's experience that users, businesses, sectors and governments often have no, or very limited, ability to influence how private companies (many of whom will not be head-quartered in Aotearoa) capture, use and share data. While the European Union has been able to make some inroads through its General Data Protection Regulations, it is improbable that we could, on our own, influence the data policies of major tech companies that New Zealanders interact with. This creates a barrier to effective implementation of the potential levers available for government as set out in the LTIB.

We submit that the “gem” in the LTIB is the final paragraph in the document that speaks to the importance of the government’s role as a trusted producer of data services. Given the creative sector’s experience of the existing data ecosystem in Aotearoa, we would endorse this as the starting point for Stats NZ’s future work. **The core business of ensuring that central government is capturing data that is relevant and timely and that accurately reflects the economic, social and cultural mix of Aotearoa must be delivered first** given how it underpins, and influences any future data ecosystem.

WeCreate is available to support and connect government to our sector as the LTIB process evolves.

Ngā mihi maioha,

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Chair
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Auckland, New Zealand

The logo for WeCreate, with 'We' in blue, 'C' in green, 'r' in yellow, 'e' in orange, and 'ate' in red.

GROWING OUR CREATIVE SECTOR
www.wecreate.org.nz

The WeCreate Action Plan

Between 2017 and 2019 WeCreate undertook extensive consultation across the sector, via hui and specific working groups (some of which are ongoing), resulting in a primary objective of partnering with government in a pan-Ministerial approach to an Action Plan to boost economic development and growth in the sector. A draft Action Plan was delivered to government in March 2019, and the sector was delighted to learn that it would be included in MBIE's Industry Transformation Plan programme from 2020.

The development of the WeCreate Action Plan included officials from MBIE, MCH, MFAT, NZTE, MoE, Stats NZ, and Callaghan Innovation. Regular hui were held to connect these Ministries and agencies with industry, and with each other, in a more 'joined-up' approach to the sector.

Alongside the sector-level Action Plan, WeCreate has been closely connected to the development of the Interactive Aotearoa report, the Screen Sector Strategy, and a variety of regional creative industries and arts strategies – all of which share strong similarities of intent and make recommendations to maximise opportunities and solve issues, and which could be most effectively addressed in a pan-sector approach.

With the advent of COVID-19, WeCreate consulted its Members & Friends on the impacts of the pandemic on their industries, and adapted the Action Plan to a Recovery and Renewal Plan, to address the immediate needs of the sector and lay the foundations for the ITP. The Recovery & Renewal Plan was delivered to Ministers in early April 2020.

In late July 2020, WeCreate was informed by MBIE and MCH that the Industry Transformation Plan for the creative sector would not be progressing for the foreseeable future, in light of the significant Budget 2020 investment made by government to support the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector through its recovery from COVID-19.

WeCreate's current work-streams on behalf of the sector include:

- On-going liaison with government departments relevant to the economic development of the sector – including MBIE, MCH, MoE, TEC, MFAT, NZTE, NZ Story, MSD, Stats NZ, Callaghan Innovation.
- Working closely with NZ Tech/MBIE on the creative tech aspects of the Digital Industry Transformation Plan, and the NZ Tech & Innovation Story.
- Advising MCH on the development of a new measurement model for the sector.
- Participating in the Review of the Copyright Act from a sector-level perspective.
- Participating in the Reference Group for the design of the Workforce Development Councils in the Reform of Vocational Education, liaising between industry and the Toi Mai WDC, and liaising with central and local government on several other projects related to skills, capability and business development.
- Providing industry advice and connections to MFAT (including APEC/ABAC) regarding current and forthcoming trade negotiations and development of policy on digital trade.
- Providing industry advice and connections to the Productivity Commission in respect of its 'Frontier Firms' enquiry.
- On-going liaison with other strategic work in, or relevant to, the sector including the Screen Sector Strategy, Interactive Aotearoa, Te Taumata Toi a Iwi, Create Auckland 2030 and other regional arts/creative strategies – all of which have many commonalities with WeCreate's Action Plan.
- On-going liaison with CreaTer – the alliance of creative tertiary educators.



WeCreate’s Members and Friends are:

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| Advertising & Illustrative Photographers Assn | APRA AMCOS NZ |
| Auckland Unlimited (formerly ATEED/RFA) | Australia & NZ Screen Association |
| Christian Copyright Licensing International | Commercial Communications Council |
| Copyright Licensing NZ | Creative NZ |
| Design Assembly | Designco |
| Directors & Editors Guild NZ | Equity NZ |
| Home Entertainment Association NZ | Independent Music NZ |
| Interactive Games & Entertainment Assn | Mindful Fashion NZ |
| Motion Picture Distributors Association | 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 |
| Print Media Copyright Agency | Publishers Association of NZ |
| Recorded Music NZ | SAE Institute |
| Screen Industry Guild Aotearoa NZ | Script to Screen |
| Screenrights | Sky Network Television |
| Screen Production and Development Association | The Creative Thinking Project |
| TVNZ | Weta Group |