

18 April 2024

E te kaipānui, tēnā koe

Creative New Zealand's Support for Creative Waikato in Long-Term Plans 2024-2034

Creative New Zealand is the national arts development agency of Aotearoa New Zealand, responsible for encouraging, promoting and supporting the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders. We do this by investing in the arts, developing the arts, advocating for the arts, providing leadership in the arts, and by partnering for the arts.

Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori are an important part of developing strong and thriving towns and cities, and connected and healthy communities. We encourage Council to recognise in its decision-making the essential role arts and creativity play in the wellbeing of your residents.

We write to offer our support for the great work that Creative Waikato continue to undertake in your region by supporting and strengthening arts and creativity in the Waikato – and, in turn, enhancing the wellbeing of Waikato communities.

The Creative Waikato team play a vital role in providing a diverse range of opportunities for Waikato residents to engage with and participate in the arts. They also provide important support and training for artists, creatives and arts organisations. They have a proven track record of developing initiatives and projects that meet the needs of both the arts community and audiences. We often use the Creative Waikato 'model' to talk about meaningful regional arts development when we are meeting with councils throughout Aotearoa. Last year they were also part of two different panels we hosted with local government leaders to highlight what can be achieved in community wellbeing outcomes by investing in regional arts organisations.

It's exciting to see Creative Waikato continuing to develop strategic resources including the Waikato Arts Navigator, Wellbeing and Arts, Culture and Creativity in the Waikato, Performing Arts Strategy and the new advocacy resource Joyful Steps to Community Advocacy which offer engaging, insightful and valuable support to both artists, creatives and the wider public.



As your Council works through its Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 budget deliberations, we encourage Council to continue to work with and resource Creative Waikato as the integral pin in your plan to support arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi in your community.

Currently, Creative Waikato are working with Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council, Waipa District Council, Otorohanga District Council, Ruapehu District Council, South Waikato District Council, Waitomo District Council, Hauraki District Council, Matamata-Piako District Council, Thames-Coromandel District Council and have also made a connection with the Waikato Regional Council, offering a strong framework for how councils can best engage with their local arts communities.

We know through our own research that participating in arts, cultural and creative activities build united and resilient communities, increases community wellbeing, and offers ways to express our unique cultural identities. Importantly, these activities also attract and accelerate economic activity, and can equip people with the skills needed for the workforce of the future.

Creative Waikato as a regional arts organisation offers a strategic and unique opportunity for councils in the Waikato to work collaboratively and undertake collective action that will deliver greater impact for their communities. Creative New Zealand hopes that Creative Waikato will continue to be supported in its role as a vital link between the Council, your arts whānau and the wider community.

Ngā mihi nui, nā



David Pannett

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Pou Whakahaere Matua, Rautaki me te Tūhono

