



# Voice for impact

## – 2023 advocacy for ngā toi arts, culture and creativity

Advocacy for ngā toi arts, culture and creativity is central to our work at Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi. The year ahead will provide several significant opportunities for us to support a sector voice on issues affecting arts practitioners and organisations. These include the Auckland Council budget consultation; the Creative New Zealand review of its services and funding; and the general election. Each of these provides an opportunity to highlight immediate issues affecting sector sustainability as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic linger on, as well as promoting the change needed to create the conditions for a future sector that is more resilient, equitable, inclusive, sustainable and valued.

A summary of our advocacy activity since 2019, *Hōhā and Hauora – Learning about Arts Advocacy*, provides an overview of our sector engagement, the role of the Ngā Toi Advocacy Network, key advocacy activities and events, and the major issues addressed. The aim of our advocacy mahi has been to strengthen the creative ecosystem to create conditions and environments where all of our makers feel included and supported.

The issues highlighted in the summary will continue to be the focus of our advocacy in 2023. These include:

- The need for a national sector strategy. A useful example is the Australian Government's new landmark National Cultural Policy - *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*, a 5-year plan to renew and revive Australia's arts, entertainment and cultural sector.
- The sustainability of arts careers. The cost of living and being able to make a living are major concerns for practitioners across the sector. We advocate for a robust career process that starts with increased recognition of ngā toi in our school curriculum that provides accessible pathways into sustainable arts and creative careers.
- Sector equity and inclusion Systemic racism, and issues of class, gender and identity lead to disparities in access to income and opportunities. Addressing these issues includes exploring how the sector honours Te Tiriti, the process of decolonisation, and the recognition of the diversity of arts, cultural and creative practice across the many cultures and identities within Aotearoa.
- Sector funding, and funding systems Boosts to sector funding to address the impacts of COVID-19 were welcome, but do not address long-term underfunding of the sector. Processes around funding, including tendering, contracting and reporting, add additional challenges for practitioners and arts organisations.

Sector funding is the key issue that we will be addressing over the coming weeks as we respond to Auckland Council's proposed budget. This includes the option to discontinue all contestable regional grants (across arts, events, community recreation, environment, heritage etc \$8m in total), and the removal of another \$20m from community and social innovation and economic development programmes, which includes art events programmes.

In association with the Ngā Toi Advocacy Network, we will look to provide information and resources to help the Tāmaki Makaurau arts, culture and creative sector communicate what those grants make possible for our communities, and the value of arts events to the life of our city.