



8 April 2020

Hon Kris Faafoi
Minister of Broadcasting, Communications and Digital Media
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON 6160

By email: k.faafoi@ministers.govt.nz

cc Bernadette Cavanagh, Louise Lennard MCH

Dear Minister

LETTER OF EXPECTATIONS 2020/2021

Thank you for your letter of 11 March 2020 advising us of your expectations for NZ On Air for the 2020/21 financial year.

As New Zealand's primary public media funder, NZ On Air's vision of connecting and reflecting our nation remains clearly aligned to your expectations. We look forward to working with you to contribute to cultural diversity, sustainability of the cultural sector, identity and a strong public media system.

We address your specific points below:

Key strategic challenges and opportunities

You ask us to outline the strategic challenges and opportunities. NZ On Air continues to support a wide range of content for diverse New Zealand audiences and platforms, aimed at achieving our strategic goals of quality, diverse and discoverable content for New Zealanders. The key strategic challenge NZ On Air currently faces remains the rapid rate of change in the media environment and audience behaviours, alongside the changing and increasingly diverse New Zealand demography. Some of these changes are accelerating under the impact of the Covid-19 situation.

At this present time, we are in uncharted territory and are working closely with the wider media industry, focusing on being able to continue delivering public media content to New Zealand audiences.

Ensuring there is a sufficient diversity of content that is of suitable quality and discoverable by audiences is an ongoing challenge. We also face challenges in public interest journalism (including news and current affairs) which we are working to address through new and innovative approaches with some success. However, as with all areas of need, adequate funding to make a real difference without reducing support in other areas is necessary.

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The opportunities for NZ On Air below are substantially unchanged from last year, prefaced by the work on Strong Public Media, which is an opportunity for a wider sector approach to some of the opportunities and challenges we face:

- **Strong public media** – this is an opportunity to reset and refresh the approach to public media in order to deliver better outcomes for New Zealand audiences. We continue to support and contribute to this work. We see it as an opportunity to better meet the needs of diverse New Zealand audiences, and support a healthy media ecosystem, now and in the future.
- **Fighting back against the global deluge** – we need to increase the volume and diversity of powerful New Zealand stories that reflect NZ identity, of a standard that competes with the globe’s best.
- **Engaging underserved audiences** – we need to reflect an ethnically diverse New Zealand by supporting a wider range of content; improve disability media access by boosting services.
- **Encouraging plurality of voices** – we need content to challenge and discuss important issues, and support different viewpoints, and need to expand the range of trusted journalism and documentary.
- **Seizing technology to better serve audiences** – we need to support the survival of specialist platforms and increase their audience by modernising technology.
- **Welcoming new and diverse storytellers** – we need to champion cultural diversity by creating new pathways to bring fresh, often younger, perspectives into local storytelling.
- **Amplifying NZ music** – we need to lift the profile of local music on the streaming services NZ audiences use, and maintain a strong presence on commercial radio, so talented artists get their music heard by more people and can develop sustainable careers.

Sector priorities and public media outcomes

We note the four priority outcomes set by the Arts, Culture and Heritage Ministers and the Government’s priority outcome of making New Zealand proud, specifically, valuing who we are as a country. This is well-supported by our vision “Connecting and reflecting Aotearoa” and our aim “Great New Zealand public media is valued and enjoyed by New Zealand audiences”. We confirm that we will continue to work with the Ministry to develop a stronger picture of access and participation by New Zealand’s diverse communities.

We are also pleased to note the three public media outcomes. All these sets of goals are inherent to our work and the statute that drives us. This is reflected in our planning document and our daily operations and funding activities.

Specific expectations

Regarding the specific expectations set out in your letter:

- **New enduring letter of expectations**
You emphasise the four enduring expectations regarding effective governance; no surprises; supporting the Maihi Karauna; and increasing collaboration. We confirm that these are all areas of focus in our work and approach and we will continue to monitor and review guidance and advice as it becomes available.

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- **Entity direction**

We note your seven specific expectations regarding entity direction and your intention to review your letter after the outcome of the business case in July. We will continue our work in all these areas. We note our continued focus on funding the production of diverse local content. Some of the areas you wish us to prioritise (Māori, Pacific, regional, children and young audiences) are covered by our Budget 2020 bid for additional resource. The outcome of this will influence the extent to which we can meet these audience needs.

- **Governance**

We note your expectations and confirm we will comply. Processes are already in place for the Board's self-assessment of its governance practices in line with guidance and in order to meet the due date.

Our draft Statement of Intent 2020/21-2024 and draft Statement of Performance Expectations 2020/21 will be with you by end of April 2020 as usual, after we have discussed with the Ministry, and reflects these expectations, challenges and opportunities.

Yours sincerely



Ruth Harley
CHAIR