

Profile of Creative Professionals 2022

NZ On Air response

May 2023



Purpose

This document outlines NZ On Air's response to the findings of the 2022 Profile of Creative Professionals research, published in May 2023. It considers the main findings in relation to creative professionals engaged in the sectors we fund, and in the context of our legislated mandate.

Introduction

NZ On Air is interested in the well-being of individuals involved in the creative arts represented in the sectors we fund, the diversity of the workforce, and in the sustainability of careers in these sectors. For the purpose of this research the relevant sectors are media production, contemporary recorded music, and gaming.

NZ On Air is tasked with reflecting the culture and identity of Aotearoa through funded media content. While our legislation (the Broadcasting Act 1989) does not reference sector support, we recognise that we need a diverse and vibrant creative sector to provide the content that reflects Aotearoa as it is today. And we recognise that our investments in funding content production, promotion, capability building and research impact that diversity and vibrancy.

The following discussion is presented in the context of an agency that recognises its responsibilities and constraints in terms of influencing well-being and career sustainability.

Key findings

- Overall creative professionals earn a similar amount per annum to self-employed New Zealanders but much less than wage and salary earners. Women earn less than men, Māori earn slightly more than the median, and deaf and disabled earn considerably less than the median.
- 44% do work outside of the creative sector (in addition to their creative work). Music and sound artists are among those most likely to also work outside the creative sector, and those working in the gig economy.
 - 71% of creative professionals consider themselves part of the gig economy.
- COVID-19 has had a net negative effect on the incomes of creative professionals. But in our sectors:
 - 79% of video game developers said that their income is higher now.
 - 47% of music and sound artists said that their income is lower now.
- Most creative professionals (68%) think their income is not fair reward for the time they spend on their creative pursuit.
 - Those most likely to think their income was unfair were deaf and disabled, performing artists (including music), those in the gig economy, and women.
- 52% had experienced burnout in the last year.

The levers we can pull

Broadly speaking, in terms of creative professionals, our funding is delivered via Music funding or Media Content Production funding. (Our involvement in funding gaming is limited to a modest number of children's games.)

In Music we fund the creation and promotion of Singles and Projects (usually EP's or albums), as well as supporting many development opportunities. In Media content production funding we fund content for a wide variety of audiences across many different platforms.

Because our funding is focused on the content and audience outcomes, we are limited in how we can directly influence the incomes of individuals. The most important things we can do are to:

- **Keep the funding flowing** – this creates work opportunities in the media and music sectors (and to a lesser extent gaming).
 - In the case of music, having paid for the creation of the content, we then help with promoting the songs, and the artists make their income from sales of the songs.
 - We actively encourage artists to include the optional Artist Creation Fee in their budgets and funding claims, so they can receive payment for the creation of their music.
 - In the case of media production, we will be mindful that budgets allow for fair industry rates for the work done.
- **Continue to invest in development and capability** building initiatives, as this provides opportunities for individuals to upskill, increasing the opportunities for success
- **Continue to monitor, research and report** on the diversity and sustainability of the sectors and in doing so to highlight areas where more can be done.

How we contribute to development and capability building

In addition to funding production projects, in the **media production sector** we:

- Fund targeted development interventions to increase participation and develop skills of people involved in screen production who represent segments that are under-represented (ie Pan-Asian, Pacific peoples).
- Provide sponsorship support for a range of industry events that provide knowledge sharing and upskilling
- Recognise that content development funding is an important investment in the pipeline for new talent and ideas

In addition to New Music Singles and New Music Projects funding, in the **music sector** we:

- Fund artist development by pairing emerging artists and experienced producers through the New Music Development scheme.
- Provide sponsorship support for industry capability-building initiatives such as SongHubs
- Provide targeted funding rounds to lift participation by under-represented segments such as through New Music Pasifika, New Music Pan-Asian and Waiata Takitahi.
- Following on from the 2018 Profile of Creative Professionals we introduced an optional artist creation fee in all the New Music Singles and New Music Project grants.

Monitoring and reporting

Our annual Diversity reports monitor the diversity of the music and media production sectors, in terms of gender, ethnicity and disability. Gaps spotted in these reports have spurred action such as development funding initiatives for Pan Asian screen creatives and Pan Asian music artists.

We will also be commissioning research in 2023 into barriers to entry and participation in the music industry for women, female identifying and non-binary artists.

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