

A REVIEW OF NZ ON AIR'S MUSIC FUNDING

VICTORIA KELLY / 2023



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LANDSCAPE



INTRODUCTION

“We’re living in wild and crazy times!” Artist

In this report, I aim to present a snapshot of the NZ popular music industry in 2023 and examine the role, perception and efficacy of NZ On Air’s Music funding initiatives within it – as well as to explore how fit for purpose those initiatives might be in the foreseeable future.

(Plot spoiler: the foreseeable future is not very foreseeable.)

To that end, I’ve interviewed 70 music industry professionals – a range of Māori, Pasifika, Asian, Pākehā and other ethnic Kiwis – among them artists, producers, managers, publicists, educators, journalists, radio programmers, Digital Service Providers (DSPs), record labels, music publishers, and industry executives. Because this is Aotearoa, a lot of those people are all (or at least, several) of those things at once. Any quotes I have used have been anonymised and the artists pictured in this report have no correlation to the quotes I have used.

How is our industry feeling?

For a start, we’re gob-smacked by the sheer scale of the marketplace: 100,000 songs are uploaded to music streaming services every day ^[1] along with 34 million videos to TikTok ^[2], 95 million images to Instagram ^[3] and 720,000 hours of video to YouTube ^[4]. The daily number of hours streamed globally is 1.44 billion ^[5]. We’re intimidated by the volume of this content and perplexed by the behaviour of its audience – a vast, seething mass of data points acting with all the self-awareness and accountability of a mad emperor checking his TikTok feed while art burns.

Career sustainability is a huge issue for us. The 2023 Profile of Creative Professionals (commissioned by Creative New Zealand and NZ On Air) revealed that the annual median income for creative work is \$37,000 – just sixty percent of the annual median income for all New Zealanders (\$61,800)^[6]. The median income for musicians is even lower – a bleak \$28,800 (which includes income from other sources) – less than half of what the average New Zealander earns. Add to this a cost of living crisis and rising inflation in the wake of a global pandemic and climate upheaval. Add to that the challenges faced by ethnic and gender minorities in our industry – voices we desperately need if our music is to truly reflect the breadth and depth of our culture. And add to that the implications of a pendulum power-swing from artist to audience that has liquefied whatever solid ground we thought we’d reclaimed as an industry after the tectonic shift from physical to digital consumption.

We are oscillating between optimism and pessimism. We’re prevaricating on what technology, nature, and the future might have in store for us. We’re wondering if the fate of the music we release is simply to dissolve into the internet without trace, like tears in rain. We’re nervously contemplating our mono-cultural attitudes in a bi-cultural nation with a multi-cultural population. We are trying, but not yet managing, to achieve gender equity. We are fighting to keep our people safe and well. We are tired. And we are also – without exception – grateful for NZ On Air funding because our ability to create depends on it.



GRATITUDE



"First up, before we get into it... can I just say how grateful we are to have any funding opportunities at all?"

Manager

"You'd struggle to find anyone who isn't grateful for NZ On Air funding. Any criticism that people offer will definitely be coming from a place of acknowledgement, of how privileged we are to receive this support."

Producer

"I really appreciate the diversity that our funding enables. I love that my colleagues who speak multiple languages are able to make albums in those languages. I think funding is a huge expression of care and admiration for our artists and I feel grateful to be on a timeline where I have access to it. "

Children's Artist

The most important thing to acknowledge is that funding doesn't happen the world over. It's a unique proposition here that's coveted by other artists and managers around the world. There's shock and awe on the faces of our international colleagues when they learn what we have access to. They're like... 'You get what?'"

Manager

"I've had New Music Project funding from NZ On Air in the past and for me as an independent artist that's been life changing. The people I work with overseas are boggled by the government support we receive. Funding has given me autonomy over my career because I didn't have to source a large advance from a label in order to make my record. It did take me a while to reach a point where I could be funded and it was disheartening in the beginning when I got turned down – but now I've been able to create a body of work that helps to sustain me, and I have NZ On Air funding to thank for that."

Artist

"Funding is part of a much bigger picture for artists. It lightens the load across your whole career. When you know you're probably going to lose your shirt touring, marketing, and investing into your career as a whole, funding doesn't just help you record your music... it takes the load off everything else that would suffer if you had to fund your whole record as well."

Artist



CONTEXT

“We are approaching a cultural crisis. What other conclusion can you come to? Not that things have ever been easy, but many things that used to work just don’t anymore... The creation of culture takes money and time. Preferably both. So what happens when people don’t have either?” The Curious Case of the Collapsing Culture / Metro Magazine – Autumn 2023 ^[7]

There’s a limit to what can be covered in a review of this nature. What’s been revealed over the course of my conversations across the contemporary music sector is a deep sense of crisis in our industry – something beyond the control of a single organisation, but unavoidable in any discussion about music funding in Aotearoa.

Another thing that’s been resoundingly stated is the depth of our belief in the talent and uniqueness of our artists – and in music itself as a necessity for life. We may be struggling but everyone is raging against the dying of the light. Recently, music has helped us to get through some very tough times. Our musicians are the first to rally and raise us up in the aftermath of pandemics and cyclones. There’s enormous talent, skill, resilience and spirit in our creative community. There’s incredible music pouring out of our artists and writers. But what is happening to all of this amazing music we’re making?

Export should be the answer.

The true consequences of the steadily declining priority given to music and the arts in our education sector need to be fully comprehended and addressed by government. There’s a lack of access to specialist teachers for large tracts of our school population, and a lack of investment in the people who teach music and the arts from primary school onwards. That – along with a profound push towards STEM subjects at the expense of the arts – is leading to a lack of skill and knowledge at secondary school level. And that – along with commercial ‘bums-on-seats’ recruitment imperatives at tertiary level (which fails to account for the more personalised nature of music tuition) – is leading to the erosion of music schools and university departments (for example, the closure of MAINZ and the proposed dismemberment of courses at the New Zealand School of Music at Victoria University) during a transformative time in our society when we need creativity and its transferable skills more than ever.

“What are the first things to go in tertiary environments when there’s a purge of the systems? The Arts and Humanities. They get thrown under the bus because there’s no appreciation or understanding of their real value.” Creative Industry

Ultimately, the future of our entire music industry (and our population’s ability to learn and apply creative thought processes and skills to other subjects) is at stake. If the knowledge and power of our many musical traditions is not passed on by qualified people – and not valued by society at large – who or what, in the age of corporate tech monopolies and AI, will determine and shape our culture instead?

Music and the arts must not be allowed to become a luxury that only the wealthy can afford to pursue and sustain. Excellence across the spectrum of our musical articulations should be accessible, so that everyone can experience and aspire towards it. Investment in a broad and diverse musical education – as an inseparable dimension of being human, and a necessary tool to help us navigate, articulate, and critically apprehend the world – from Primary School onwards, should be the answer.



We need to fight for the priority of Music and the Arts in the Government's agenda. The Prime Minister's Trade Delegation to China in June 2023 included Agriculture, Education, Fitness, Gaming, and Tourism, but there was no Music delegate to showcase the spectrum of our work to the fifth largest music market in the world. Why doesn't the government that invests in our music back our comparatively weightless and environmentally sustainable product (a product which can not only demonstrate our nation's creativity, but also embody and promote our nation's brand and identity) towards export?

We need to reinforce an inviolate understanding of our music's cultural and economic value to the many other business sectors that interact with us. We especially need the technology companies that deliver music to New Zealanders to acknowledge and address the entrenched monopolies present in their content, offer fairer returns to our artists and songwriters, and represent the culture they're operating in as a condition of operating in it – or at least as a condition of using publicly owned assets, such as radio frequencies and cable networks.

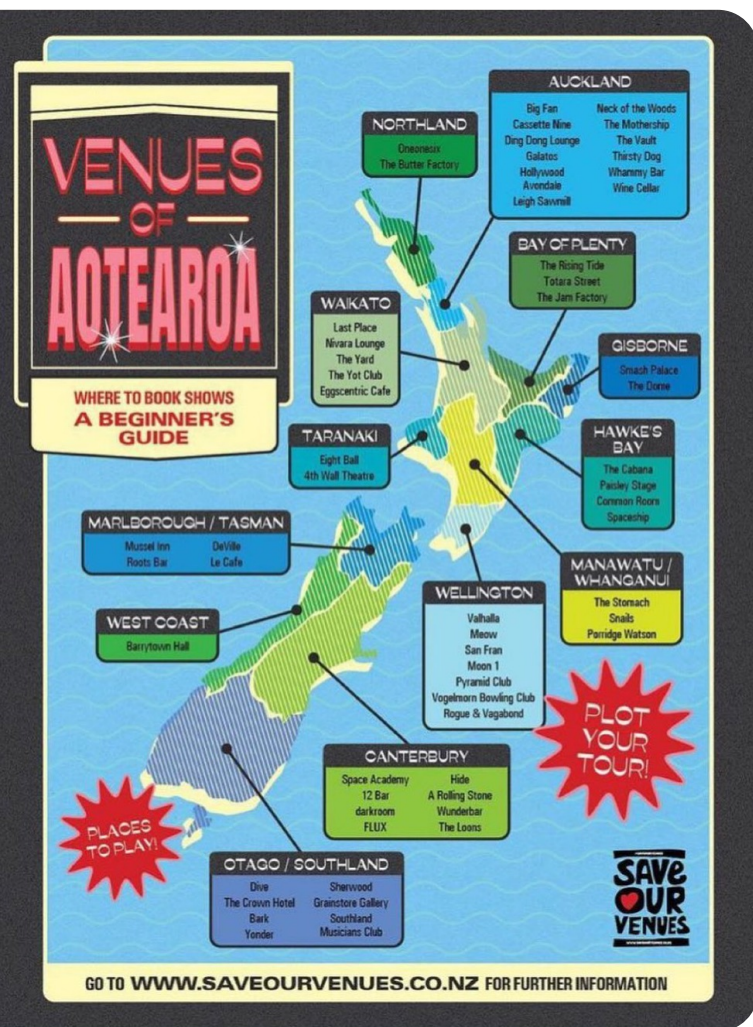
"People often blame "the internet" for the rampant destruction of livelihoods, as if the technology itself were some kind of demon, hellbent on erasing the value of creative work. But, as antitrust advocate Matt Stoller has said, "Technological innovation happens along the legal framework it is born into." We can control and structure the marketplace of the internet through our laws and the enforcement of those laws. We can eliminate glaring corporate conflicts of interest and make the web — our now-de facto gathering space as a society — a better place to be an artist and an audience member." Death Spiral of Hollywood Monopolies - Alena Smith / The Ankle – 8 August 2023 ¹⁸¹

Part of this requires us to face the challenges that go hand in hand with the monetization of culture. How do we, as a creative industry that measures its value not only in economic terms but also in cultural ones, resolve the elephantine Catch-22 in the room... that putting a price-tag on a priceless thing can erode rather than reinforce its value? How do we address the fact that now, in this oversaturated market born of technological disruption and internet piracy, the difference between priceless and free has become impossible to distinguish in the minds of our audiences? Sustainability is dependent on securing a balance between those two extremes. But how does an atomized community of creative professionals set and enforce their value without large-scale support from government, and legislation to protect that value?

The economic layers we attach to art and culture become most critical when they *limit* the ability of people to make and experience it. On one hand the technology industry has made it easier than ever for people to create and consume music – we're inhaling and exhaling 1.44 billion hours of content, a lot of which includes music, every day. It's wonderful that so many people in the world have been empowered to create, and to share their creations. On the other hand, having free and immediate access to the unfiltered vapor of society's consciousness is not the same thing as having access to meaningfully distilled art and culture, made by skilled people who've devoted time and resources to the development of their craft. If we can't filter for the exceptional, we're all just hyperventilating on the ordinary.

Creators have always wrestled with gatekeepers in one form or another. Today, it would seem that the gatekeepers are no longer even human, and the algorithms that direct music to us don't distinguish between the exceptional and the ordinary, they distinguish between the popular and the unpopular. So our access to culture is limited, under the illusion of choice, by the simple fact that our delivery systems don't take the cultural qualities of their content into account – it's not their job... their job is to keep people on their platforms and generate advertising and subscription revenue for the companies that control them. But whose job is it then, to ensure a sustainable culture? So much of what is happening in our industry is beyond the remit of NZ On Air... but an agency with a mandate to promote the creation of culture and ensure access to it for New Zealanders has a very important role to play.





Venues of Aotearoa / Save Our Venues – designed by Ans Taylor

On an individual level, technological change has meant that the nature of music creation – and the definition of a music creator – has changed at its core. We need to think about what that means for our artists in the landscape of a small country. The Pyrrhic quest of balancing not only music creation but also audience engagement with the demands of everyday life is taking such a toll on our creators that it's becoming unfeasible for them to keep working in our sector – their investment is so high and their returns are so low. That load increases profoundly for the people in our industry who are working to advocate on behalf of their communities, and to advance and restore their culture (because music is so powerful and effective in that space). It also increases profoundly for parents. How can we forge a pathway towards genuine career sustainability for us all, equally?

We also need to think about the health and wellbeing of our individual professionals.

Our industry is not safe. We need to work together to tackle the issues of abuse, inequality and prejudice that continue to hold us back. Currently, the word 'crisis' comes up again and again. Cultural crisis. Mental health crisis. Cost of living crisis. Inequality crisis. Representation in our industry for the full spectrum of our population; clear information and strong infrastructure that reflects the unique needs and worldviews of our communities; and financial security for the organisations seeking to ensure our safety and wellbeing, should be the answer.

Many of our industry bodies are currently spending as much time applying, justifying and reporting on their funding as they are doing the work that their funding is intended to facilitate. So are many of our artists. We need the certainty that comes with secure and meaningful investment. We can't just keep demanding more from our industry and its practitioners, while eroding its resources.

We need our industry to unite... to work in unison, share knowledge, advocate, make noise, build networks and forge clear pathways for our music towards its greatest possible audience, so that the organisations and individuals within it have a hope of sustainability... so that we aren't always gearing up, reinventing wheels and embarking on long, arduous and expensive roads to nowhere.

Government funding should not be the only economic lever we can pull to make musical talent and expertise economically viable or sustainable in this country.

Neither should the removal of funding mean a death blow for our artists, our industry... or our music.



"I love music more than anything in the world.

I started making it with no expectation of making a living, just ambition and a drive to express myself and make something interesting. I found a small audience in NZ, from playing with friends and turning up to shows that no one else did, becoming a part of a community. I found a much larger audience online, from making friends with other music obsessed kids, expressing myself and becoming part of a community.

Every artist I know, the 'successful' ones and the ones starting out, have one thing in common. There's an anxiety and fear of failure that has emerged over the last few years that can be completely crushing. It kills your creativity and ambition.

Artists look to the industry for a way out of this. We just want our music heard, to feel good about what we do so we can keep doing it. The industry tells us to get funding, to sign to a label, to go viral on TikTok, to work with a better producer, to pay for PR.

It's useless advice - because it doesn't change the reality. It has become impossible to connect with any kind of meaningful audience in NZ.

You can't buy an audience. You can spend a fortune on the best producers, mixers, players in the world and still have it fall flat (I have!). You can do all the things you're supposed to do, pay for local press, go on TV, get played on the radio, get put in the right playlists, and still end up with nothing. I've done all of it! We have to accept that the traditional pathways don't work.

I need to feel confident, to feel creative and excited about what I do. I need to feel like the emotion, hard work and ambition that I put into my art isn't going to be wasted. I need to feel that if a project doesn't do as well as I'd hoped - I can get back up again and keep creating. To learn from past experience and move forward."

A critically acclaimed artist with tens of millions of global streams



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ENABLE EXPORT

Reframe NZ On Air's remit to facilitate the export of NZ music, so that artists can better access their audiences and sustain their careers

- Allow funds to be spent on international promotion and marketing
- Support local publicists and managers to grow their international networks and increase the global range of their activities
- Create an International Marketing position within NZ On Air to develop and fast-track global pathways and relationships
- Create an annual Export funding stream for select artists on the brink of global success, and work in unison with industry to give them the push they need to break through

2. TIER FUNDING

Adjust New Music funding streams to allow for greater agility, elasticity and fairness for applicants and recipients

- Create an Artist stream within the New Music Development fund for emerging artists not wishing to collaborate with Producers
- Create separate streams for Emerging and Established artists within New Music Single funding
- Create a greater range within budgets so that the specific needs and parameters of individual projects are better reflected in the funds allocated to them
- Require a portion of demonstrated, non-recoupable co-investment and accountability from Major Labels in return for taxpayer support

3. DEFINE SUCCESS

Set clear measures of success for Artists, and fund according to their demonstrated ability to achieve that success in their chosen spaces

- Clearly communicate who you are seeking to fund and what you are funding them do to
- Create extramusical criteria to mitigate demand on funds by identifying motivated artists who are driven to build careers – not just moments
- Abandon notions of mainstream and niche in order to reflect the range and agnosticism of the evolving creative landscape
- Ensure there is clarity about the funding pathway itself, where people sit and how they can progress through it

4. DEVELOP CAPABILITY

Offer business development to artists to help them increase their industry knowledge, networks and confidence

- Provide clear feedback to unsuccessful grant applicants
- Ensure that participants in the New Music Development funding stream have access to guidance about writer splits, producer shares, and ongoing costs
- Offer industry 101 guidance to first time funding recipients, in collaboration with other industry bodies
- Provide mentorship for recipients that is reflective of their cultural worldviews



5. INCREASE FLEXIBILITY

Reduce any unnecessary loads or restrictions on artists that further compromise their ability to create, or engage their audiences

- Remove milestone payments and simplify the drawdown process to alleviate administrative overload and financial stress, and help artists respond to change
- Allow greater freedom for artists to determine whether they want to include video as part of their outcome, and include live performances aligned to recordings
- Introduce quick-fire grants to allow artists to capitalise and act on opportunities as and when they arise
- Create shorter, more specific New Tracks playlists that are better targeted towards the programmers and communities that they're intended to engage

6. SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Empower industry infrastructure to better support and promote artists and their music in the transforming environment

- Consider long-term sustainability as part of decision-making criteria, and fund towards viable careers that can support (and be supported by) strong infrastructure
- Increase budgets so that infrastructure providers (as well as Artists) can be paid more fairly
- Remove the requirement for video content so that funds can be redirected as needed if DIY content is created
- Allow publicity budgets to be allocated to managers if it's more expedient and economical for artists and managers to promote their own releases

7. PRIORITISE EQUITY

Embed safety requirements, representation and accountability into funding streams

- Create parallel New Music Development and New Music Project streams for waiata Māori in collaboration with Māori organisations
- Establish a co-fund for Pasifika artists with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples so that strategies and resources can be aligned and expanded
- Enshrine cultural worldviews in targeted funding streams, and define success according to them
- Require a safe environment to be a condition of funding, and create accountability for that

8. UNITE INDUSTRY

Collaborate across industry to achieve the above, and facilitate clear pathways for music from its creation to its audience

- Align funding rounds with other organisations so that artists and managers can apply a single, comprehensive business strategy and plan based on certainty
- Synchronise within NZ On Air to create incentives and facilitate opportunities for funded screen productions to use funded music
- Lobby terrestrial and online service providers to make tangible commitments to local music in the face of an international content monopoly
- Campaign to government for meaningful investment in the export potential of New Zealand Music



PANDEMIC

“An artist I manage was two days away from a huge show.

The trucks were being loaded with all the gear and the crew were getting ready to pack in the following day.

Then the August 2020 lockdown was announced.

The show was cancelled. The production guys unloaded the trucks. We had to put out a press release on the fly. It chills me to think about it, even now. We had no idea what was going to happen. We rescheduled the show for 6 months later as part of a nationwide tour.

Fast forward to the rescheduled tour... my artist had just performed an amazing show in the South Island and they were onstage receiving a standing ovation when a high-pitched noise filled the air.

All the Civil Defence alerts were going off in the audience. Another lockdown had just been announced in Auckland.

We had to reschedule the rest of the tour. We started rebooking everything all over again... new dates and shows... sorting out tickets... hoping that everything would be ok.

By that point we were thinking... fuck, we're probably going to have to reschedule all of this again next week... but we were numb to it. Not long afterwards, three of my artists were stuck in MIQ.

When society got back to some sort of normal it was such a relief, but the lasting impact of all that is hard to describe. Apart from the obvious financial hit there's a deep hesitance now. We're so much more risk averse because the spectre of Covid haunts everything.

I think we've learned how to be optimistic and pessimistic at the same time.”

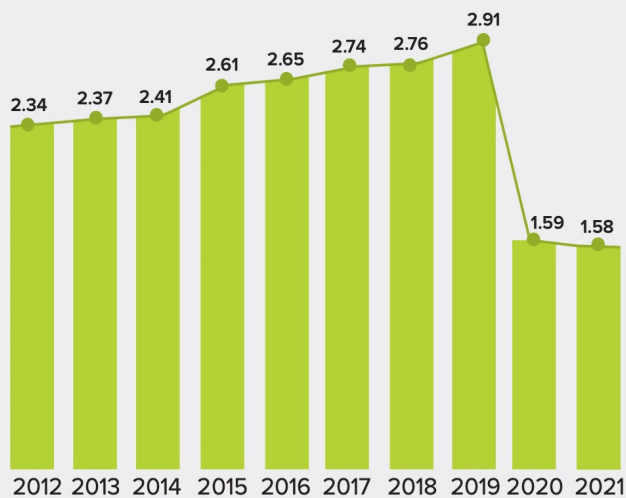
Artist Manager



SH1 / Auckland during the Covid Lockdown



Live and background collections (EUR billion)



Covid 19 causes global Live and Public Performance revenue to collapse in 2020.

CISAC Global Music Collections Report 2022 ^[10]

It's June 2023.

New Zealand Music Month has just come to a close and as we reflect on all of the wonderful live music and unmasked social gatherings we've been enjoying lately, we could be forgiven for forgetting – just for a moment – that the Covid Pandemic ever happened. But in the four years since the last review of NZ On Air's Music Funding Initiatives by Russell Brown in 2019, our industry has experienced crisis and disruption on a scale we couldn't have possibly imagined then.

On the 28th of February 2020 the first case of Covid was reported in Aotearoa and on the 25th of March the nation went into the first of several lockdowns. For the next two years we rode a rollercoaster of alert levels and traffic light settings that restricted our movements, prevented our ability to gather, and decimated our industry.

Gigs, events, awards and festivals were cancelled. Travelers endured weeks of quarantine. Venues closed and studios sat empty. Artists releasing new work here and overseas lost momentum they'd been building for months and years.

The industry scrambled to mask up, sanitize, reschedule, compensate, pivot and rebound – often to face fresh waves of cancellations and disappointment. We lost creative and technical expertise as people left the industry in order to sustain themselves.

Live performance revenue – which had become a primary source of income for artists who were still adapting to low streaming revenues in the wake of digital transformation – simply stopped.

Public performance revenue plummeted around the world, and has yet to recover.

"[Covid19] completely killed the whole music industry. It just wiped it out for pretty much two years."

Karl Puschmann - NZ Herald 31 May 2022 ^[9]



RESPONSE



San Fran / Wellington

To support those who were economically affected by Covid alert levels and lockdowns, the government introduced a wage subsidy initiative. Early economic forecasts also indicated that the restrictions required to manage the pandemic would hit the cultural sector twice as hard as the wider economy.

In May 2020 the Government approved The Cultural Recovery Programme – directing \$374 million into New Zealand’s cultural sector to help it cope. In early 2022 a further \$121 million was invested in the New Zealand arts and culture sector in response to the impacts of new Covid variants. ^[11]

Part of this support included a NZ Music Recovery Fund which was created to provide the music industry with targeted initiatives to:

- allow musicians and businesses to recoup some of their lost revenue
- support music venues and technical staff around the country
- enable the creation of new music and provide income opportunities for musicians and the recording industry

Among those initiatives were:

The NZ Music Venue Infrastructure Fund

\$3 million with grants capped at \$50,000 per venue – which supported 85 venues across 26 towns and cities around New Zealand.

The Aotearoa Touring Programme

\$5 million over two years with 3 tiers of grants capped at \$10,000 and \$50,000 – which supported 51 artists to tour nationally.

The Outward Sound Make Good Fund

\$400,000 with grants capped at \$50,000 – which supported 17 Outward Sound grant recipients who had incurred costs and losses due to Covid.



NZ On Air received an extra \$7.1m over 2021 and 2022 to support the ongoing creation of NZ music.^[12]

This increase didn't just stimulate the status quo of music creation, it facilitated wonderful and much needed expansion: the targeted creation of Te Reo Māori and bilingual songs in partnership with Te Māngai Pāho (Waiata Takitahi), the targeted creation of songs by Pasifika, Pan Asian and Children's artists, and a New Music Development fund that was established to enable newer artists and songwriters to collaborate with producers. All of these initiatives (with the exception of the Pan Asian fund which is still in the midst of its first iteration at time of writing) have been made permanent.

In addition, NZ On Air allowed for funded artists to allocate themselves a 'creation fee' (10% of the grant amount) for the first time.

But now in 2023, we find ourselves wondering what will happen when the last of that Covid support ebbs away. NZ On Air has been able to divert some resources from screen to music in order to retain a \$6 million funding pool until 2024, rather than return immediately to the pre-pandemic level of \$4 million... but what then?

"One of my fears is that the funding will stop. We're still in the Covid level of funding – we're so dependent on it as an industry that a reduction would be devastating. Building resilience and reinforcing the industry structures so that artists aren't always having to start from scratch... that's important. Better infrastructure will serve far more people than one artist's single." Local Industry

"The Covid support was really impactful. People said they'd never felt so valued. Support was being wrapped around areas of the music industry that had previously been starved or ignored. It made people hopeful. But after the single largest investment that a government has ever made in contemporary music, we now have to go back to treading water... perhaps we'll even go backwards. I'm concerned that we're going to end up in a confrontational situation when we start to feel that loss."

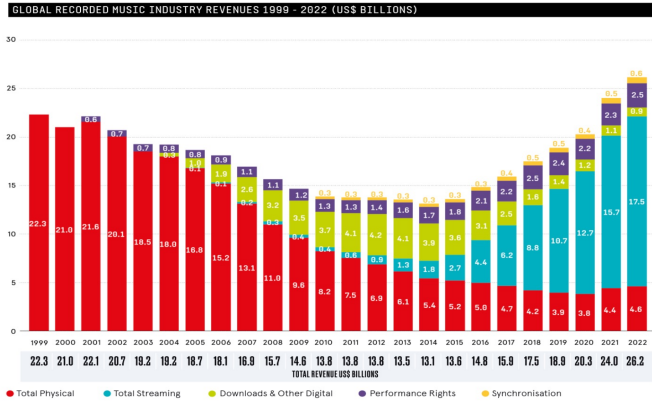
Local Industry



Hollywood / Auckland

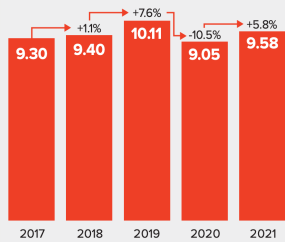


REVENUE



IFPI Global Music Report on Recorded Music 2023 [14]

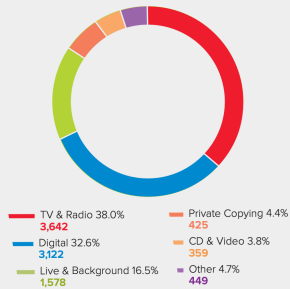
Global collections and annual growth¹ (EUR billion)



¹ CISAC 2021 data excludes US digital mechanical rights income. Past years are therefore re-stated to show like-for-like comparison.

CISAC Global Music Collections Report 2022 [10]

Global mix of creators' income streams in 2021 (EUR million)



Meanwhile, demand for music in the world continues to grow.

In 2022, global recorded music revenue grew by 9.0% to \$26.2 billion. NZ's Recorded Music revenues rose 8% to \$15.8 million [13].

Royalties generated by musical works grew by 5.8% in 2021 to \$9.58 billion although, despite this growth, they still remained 5.1% down on pre-pandemic levels. APRA AMCOS' net distributable revenue rose 20.7% in 2022 to \$534.3 million [14]

Despite being utterly outclassed by digital consumption in volume, terrestrial broadcasting royalties remain the predominant source of income for songwriters and composers, providing the largest portion of global royalty revenue (38%) in 2021.

The strength of sound recordings and the slower recovery of musical works reflects the fact that people took comfort in recorded music during the pandemic. Music – especially back catalogue music which was familiar and reassuring to frightened, confined people – made a difference.

But even though this revenue growth is encouraging and makes an excellent argument for strong investment in the export potential of NZ music, it must be understood that most of the money doesn't stay in NZ or help our creators sustain or reinvest in their careers. It flows straight back out to overseas rightsholders on a rising tide.

"COVID-19 has highlighted the dichotomy in the contemporary music industry globally – an increasingly digital business that continues a trajectory of strong growth, but for many music creators doesn't generate meaningful return – as against live music performance which can provide a meaningful and reliable return but has been decimated by COVID-19."

APRA AMCOS CEO Dean Ormston in the APRA AMCOS 2022 Year in Review [14]



CHANGE

“The shift from the artist to the audience – that’s the biggest change I’ve ever seen in all my years in the Music Industry. Piracy was a huge change. Then Apple... Spotify... the DSP’s were gatekeepers for a while... but at least there was still some control in the market. Fans weren’t part of the conversation. But now all the intermediaries are gone and the audience is in control.”

Major Label

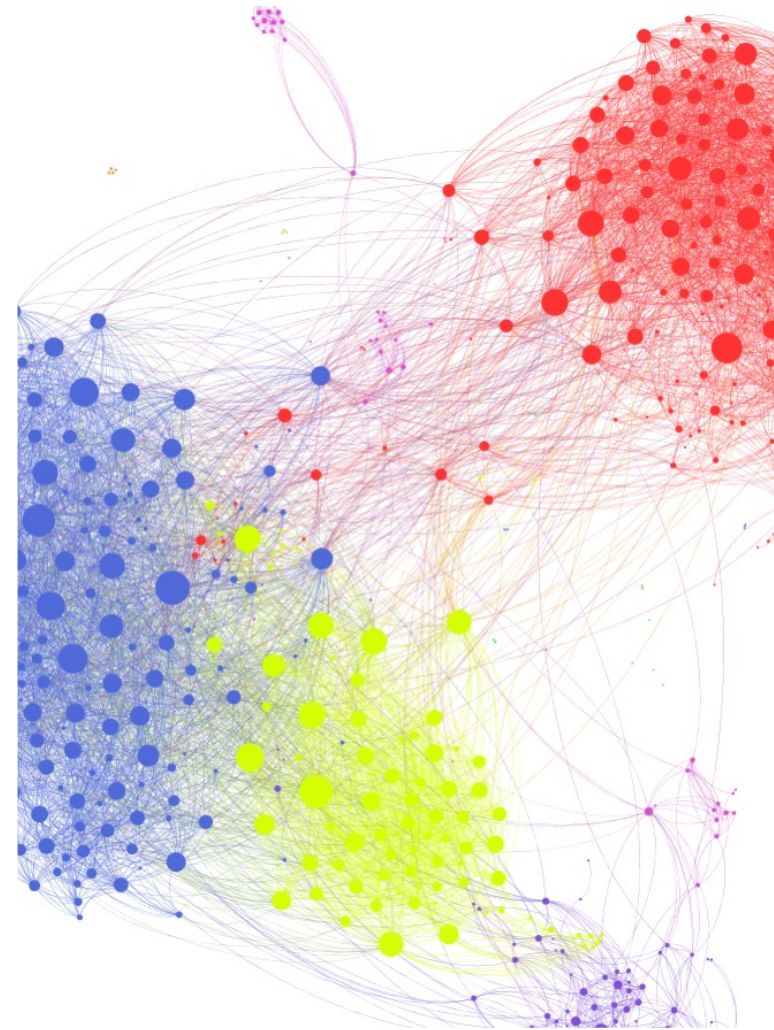
Lockdowns forced a generation of people online where they formed and maintained their friendships, received their educations, did their jobs, and found their kindred communities – accelerating digital trends that were already blossoming as smartphones and devices became ever more ubiquitous. Online communities and cultures proliferated as physically and socially isolated people relied upon them to remain connected.

Even now that the height of the pandemic seems to be moving past us, the consequences of this extraordinary shift resonate in every dimension of our lives. People have been slow to leave the comfort and safety of their homes. Anxiety has become endemic in school communities with absenteeism at record highs. Widespread burnout across essential industries has compromised the operational capacity and mental and physical wellbeing of the population. Working from home has become a new normal – completely transforming the world of work.

With a captive and mentally exhausted population online during the pandemic, Digital Service Providers adapted their delivery methods as fast as they could to keep people perpetually engaged. Change was accelerated. Streaming flourished even as the rest of the music industry ground to a halt.

As an example, in 2021 Spotify filed a patent called ‘Identification of Taste Attributes from an Audio Signal’ – technology that uses a smartphone to identify the mood and personality of its user in order to promote personalized content to them based on the tone of their voice. ^[17]

The flow of music and video determined by powerful and constantly evolving technologies and algorithms like these – analyzing our most intimate and granular details and then using them to market content to us accordingly – continues to increase. Artificial Intelligence adds exponential force to that flow... the stream is about to become a torrent.



Graph Analysis of a Social Network





Murmuration of Starlings

So with respect to funding, we need to ask ourselves: ‘what power do artists have to deliver a meaningful broadcast outcome on the streaming platform of today (not to mention the unknown platform that will disrupt it tomorrow), what influence can managers and publicists exert on a fanbase, and what real chance do record labels or music publishers have of picking winners, when music is delivered to its audience via sorcery such as this?’

“It’s time now for record companies, and for everyone else, to reinvent. That’s what we’re doing. We’re looking at sustained audience development campaigns – because the audience is now the most important thing. Artists have to understand this too. The structures around music need to be changing constantly now. They can’t stay still. The environment is moving, so we have to keep pace.” Major Label

And as we contemplate this, the 4.7 billion or so users engaging on social media are receiving regular hits of dopamine that in turn are fueling more interactions with yet more content passing through the network, leaving everyone thirsty for more. These interactions are in turn dictating the nature of the millions of pieces of new content that are being made at this very moment. The hive is making art in its own image.

So while the audience may well be in control of us as an industry, they’re like Harry Potter before he went to Hogwarts... they’re not in control of themselves.

Who controls the audience? The technology industry – built on the back of music, and yet beyond the control of the music industry.

Right now, our artists with hopes and dreams are making content and competing for the attention of an audience that is billions strong, made up of individuals who also have hopes and dreams and who are content creators too. And because technology makes it so easy for anyone to create anything, and so hard to tell whether those creations are actually bad or good... the whims, desires, patterns and fascinations of the audience are as knowable as a murmuration of birds.

The implications of this for New Zealand music creators – and for our culture – are profound and manifold, as are the implications for funding and the outcomes it seeks.

These are the wild and crazy times we’re living in.



REMIT



Alisa Xayalith

"Nothing grows your New Zealand audience like an international one."

Artist

The remit of NZ On Air is to fund public media content that reflects the cultural identity of Aotearoa and connects with New Zealand audiences.

Two messages about this remit, as it relates to the audience, have come through loud and clear:

- There are not enough opportunities in the local environment for most funded music
- Connecting with a global audience is the best (and increasingly the only) way for local artists to connect with a New Zealand audience

Commercial radio adds less than a handful of new songs to its playlists each week, chosen from all of the music the world has to offer. Their imperative is to drive advertising, not audiences, and they say (as they have always said) that audiences want international rather than local content – an ancient conundrum responsible for the creation of NZ On Air in the first place. Student and Iwi radio are more supportive of local music but their audiences are smaller and they generate fewer royalties for artists to reinvest into their careers. And although career sustainability isn't part of NZ On Air's remit, it does influence whether content that reflects the cultural identity of Aotearoa can actually be created. **Sustainability drives the evolution of our artists' work, facilitates risk and empowers creativity.**

Streaming and social media now dominate the music distribution landscape, but the total share of the streaming market for local music in New Zealand is only 8.38%, and streaming generates minimal revenue for all but a few artists. The industry is still recovering from the Covid pandemic. There is stress and uncertainty across the entire cultural sector, including in the educational institutions that feed into future creation. In light of these things, sustainable music careers in Aotearoa (for almost all of our creators) are absolutely dependent upon access to audiences and communities at an international scale. Performance data that's accessible to any artist on a streaming platform can confirm this:

"We're dealing in a global world. I can see from our streaming stats where our audiences are. Most of them are offshore, and they sustain our ability to be active in our own environment. We need to work with the audience we have. There's no music for us to give to our NZ audience without the support of our fans overseas." Manager



“Are you funding music so that it can be made – as a cultural imperative? Or are you funding it so that it can be heard – as part of your mandate? And if so, then what are the genuine channels for the music you’re funding? If nothing happens to the music being made, then what’s the purpose of funding it?”

Major Label

New Zealanders are not actively streaming local music and DSPs aren’t encouraging New Zealanders to passively stream it either. Algorithms lead where they will – they have no loyalty. Government advocacy for affirmative action in this space is called out for.

The Australian music industry has dedicated itself to this cause – and if Australia’s music industry succeeds in securing a greater presence for its music on streaming platforms (as it has recently succeeded in helping to secure AU \$286 million dollars worth of government investment in the arts and culture^[18]), New Zealand music will be at an even greater disadvantage in our regional landscape. Ensuring a global market presence not only makes business sense for our individual artists, it reinforces the presence of their music on streaming platforms, makes them competitive, and directs their music back to the local audience.

“I’ve seen multiple audience reports... they don’t give a shit where music comes from. If they hear a US song and then an NZ song, they really don’t care which one is from NZ. But if the local audience doesn’t care then neither does the one abroad, so introduce yourself on an even playing field and make your content with a global audience in mind. Because the audience IS global. You’re not just making music for Steve in NZ, you’re making it for Stefano in Italy.” Digital Service Provider

International audiences are especially important to artists working outside the ‘commercial’ sphere – those who have no hope of growing a domestic audience large enough to support their creations because of the limited size of our population. The answer to this conundrum **cannot** be for them to stop creating. These are artists who have been empowered by the internet to find meaningful audiences. They’ve bypassed the commercial criteria of the pre-algorithmic industry gatekeepers here and found global fans beyond the mainstream. However, the promotional conditions of any funding these artists receive prevent them from marketing to the audiences that make their careers possible.



Marlon Williams





Mazbou Q

"If the processes are the hurdles that prevent our artists from succeeding, then we should change the processes."

Local Industry

TikTok is turning the idea of 'commercial' or 'mainstream' music on its head in any case, as kids come flexing out of left-field with DIY 'moments' that generate more streams on that platform (which also translate powerfully onto other platforms) than many of our 'mainstream' artists could ever hope to achieve.

Music is as inextricably tied to youthful identity as it's ever been. The DIY audiovisual aesthetic that's currently so prevalent among young creators and audiences is its own form of rebellion – a conscious and unconscious rejection of the shiny, generic superficialities of commercial music in favour of the infinitely weird and random forms of individual expression that the democratisation of technology has given voice to.

The fact that physical sales – most particularly vinyl – continue to grow, and the fact that back catalogues remain lucrative (even if generational currents are changing direction beneath the surface) is testament to the fact that we're operating in a marketplace where everyone and anyone can get whatever they want, whenever they want it.

"Our artists get millions of streams but they're not thinking about the masses... they're part of a super-niche, underground internet community. Whether it's the internet or the physical world, the population is made up of communities who are all into different things. You need to look to them." Manager

"It's probably a good thing that things evolve quickly on TikTok... if you look at the charts, the Top 20 doesn't move around that much. There's probably still a Harry Styles song on there*. At least on TikTok, a flash in the pan can ignite a career." Digital Service Provider

The question of career sustainability for those random, blazing TikTok meteors showering the internet still remains... what's to prevent them from disintegrating on entry to the daily grind of a music career? Just as the Reality TV Stars that record labels started signing 15 years ago gave way to YouTubers, who gave way to Instagram Influencers... when things are moving this quickly, sustainability is as much of an issue for the disruptors as it is for the disrupted.

*Indeed there is. On 30 June 2023, 'As It Was' by Harry Styles was #19 on the Singles Chart. It was released on April 11 2022.



All we can be certain of in the current moment is that new worlds of technological possibility for artists and audiences are being unlocked every day, profound possibility exists, and the rate of change is accelerating exponentially.

But the potential of our artists to succeed and sustain themselves in the future won't be served by clinging to old ways of doing things, or to archaic concepts like niche, mainstream, genre or geographical location. If we want to facilitate our creators' search for an audience – and support them in their creation of culture – we need to liberate them from bureaucracy in whatever ways we can – while still supporting them to create. The onus is on funding bodies to identify which artists to support through strong criteria and decision making. And once the decision has been made, we have to trust them. The more restrictions we impose, the slower their response time... the harder it is for them to adapt... the fewer opportunities they will have. Everything needs to be able to move fast.

Removing limitations also means addressing boundaries beyond the musical.

For example, NZ On Air's mission - to foster and fund great NZ media content that reflects the diverse communities of Aotearoa – would be better served if it empowered kiwi artists from all ethnic and immigrant backgrounds to promote themselves to their audiences and cultures beyond Aotearoa. Especially when the audience at home – and many of the systems that underpin and deliver music to that audience – continue to discriminate (consciously and unconsciously) against non-Pākeha people.

In supporting the Crown as a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner, NZ On Air needs to ensure that Māori are not disadvantaged by its remit. Historically there have been larger audiences for Māori music overseas than there have been at home. If funding doesn't empower Māori artists to market to those global audiences in order to be heard and sustain careers here, is it serving to discriminate against them?

Allowing artefacts of prejudice (or enabling it in any future capacity) to hold our artists back simply doesn't make sense. We need to cast our net as wide as our society, and empower everybody if we wish to support and promote the creation of a rich, multi-dimensional culture in Aotearoa.

NZ On Air proactively supports the creation of waiata Māori and music by Pasifika and Pan Asian artists through its funding streams. It also seeks to ensure that artists across the gender spectrum are supported by aiming for a split of 60% men / 40% womxn across all of their funding streams.



Tami Neilson



“Hold a gun to the head of commercial radio. Accountability from them is needed. They’re using the public spectrum to broadcast. They have an obligation. Government needs to question the lack of opportunity for local artists.”

Local Industry

The 2022 Music Diversity Report shows the highest ever number of womxn applying for New Music Single funding. In 2022, applications were received from 44% men, 32% women, 17% mixed group and 4% gender diverse people. ^[19]

The visual to the right shows how much NZ music was played on commercial radio in 2022 – around 20%. It’s a greater volume than most people think, but the Top 10 NZ artists still received 4% of total radio airplay across the 16 code stations in 2022. Of the Top 100 NZ artists receiving airplay, only 8.03% were womxn.

There is only so much NZ On Air can do to support the creation of music by the true spectrum of our society if the main broadcasting platforms flatly refuse to prioritise it. Success in the music industry is always hard fought but the resolute lack of playlist support for New Zealand music in our own country makes it infinitely harder. Especially for womxn, regardless of how many might be funded to create, how good they are, or how critically acclaimed. Good old fashioned repetition and visibility drives popularity.

“The biggest tune out factor on Top 40 radio is an unfamiliar song. We can’t just keep playing the same thing and hope people will like it... at some point we have to make the call.” Commercial Radio

In 2022, NZ On Air spent about \$650,000 dollars paying commercial radio to feature local songs via Music Features ^[20]. The purpose was to create broadcast outcomes for NZ music and give local artists a chance to gain audience traction. But if these large, profit-driven media companies are taking money for limited plays that make little impact on wider audience engagement... if they can’t support more New Zealand songs to succeed via meaningful playlisting... if they’re compartmentalizing NZ content into off-peak hours in order to offset advertising risk... then perhaps we can better spend that money giving a handful of our highest potential local acts a concerted whole-of-industry push to help them break into the global market, therefore delivering more local music back to our own audience (and onto commercial radio) as a beautiful side effect of international success.

NZ ARTIST SHARE

- TOP NZ ARTIST = 5.76%
- TOP 10 NZ ARTISTS (incl Top Artist) = 19.29%
- TOP 100 NZ ARTISTS (incl Top 10) = 52.25%
- OTHER NZ ARTISTS = 47.75%



COMMERCIAL RADIO SPINS 2022

- NZ ARTISTS = 20%
- INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS = 80%

Commercial Radio = the 16 code stations^[21]





Jess B

"I think success is the freedom to create and perform sustainably, to not have to answer to anyone, and to be at the helm of my own work. I definitely need an international audience to be able to have that."

Artist

The conversation about NZ On Air's remit is – at its most fundamental level – about the creation of music that reflects the cultural identity of Aotearoa. It's about serving our culture. But it's hard to place a dollar value on culture... partly because it's abstract, partly because it's taken for granted, and partly because it's priceless.

Serving our culture doesn't only mean serving the audience, it also means our serving our creators. At the moment it would seem that the audience is doing just fine... they're in charge... they can have whatever they want... they're bathing in a waterfall of musical content, splashing around and posting pictures of themselves on social media before they dry off and head out to see their favourite international legacy artists playing at Spark Arena.

The people who really need to be empowered at the moment, in order to balance the equation inherent in the remit, are the ones trying to create our culture, here – not the ones consuming it. The creators are the ones currently in crisis.

"Given the uncertainty and the challenges of the music business, perhaps it's more important than ever to enable the creation of art, because the numbers just don't stack up... it's so expensive to be a music creator now. But then again, if you're funding music that nothing will happen to, then you're essentially offering social welfare to artists in order to keep them creating." Major Label

How do we shift our creators from welfare to investment? By doing our best to make sure that something can happen to their music. We need to back our artists with all the force we can muster. Our creators are not failing the audience in these wild and crazy times, the audience is failing them.

Backing our artists means many things. It means valuing them fairly. It means keeping them safe and well. It means making sure their spectrum is represented in its fullness. It means ensuring that the infrastructure that supports them is oiled, fueled, and maintained in order to be fully operational. It means allowing creators time and space to focus on the work of creating. That is the opportunity for funding in today's environment.



INSIGHT



NZ ON AIR MUSIC FUNDING STREAMS

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT AVAILABLE	REQUIREMENTS	FUNDING ROUNDS PER YEAR	AVERAGE APPLICANTS PER ROUND	AVERAGE FUNDED PER ROUND	% SUCCESSFUL
NEW MUSIC DEVELOPMENT	A contribution to support the development of new songs from emerging artists working with established music producers within New Zealand	Up to \$6,000	Applications from Producers only	2	65	15	23%
NEW MUSIC SINGLE	A contribution towards the eligible costs of recording a single, creating video content to promote the single, and other promotional costs	Up to \$10,000	Meet 10 out of 30 criteria for eligibility	5	220	35	20%
NEW MUSIC PROJECT	A co-investment in the creation and promotion of multi-song projects. paid on a reimbursement basis	Between \$10,000 & \$40,000	Applicant must co-invest a minimum of 20%	4	20	10 - 12	50%
WAIATA TAKITAHU	A co-funded collaboration between NZONAIR and Te Māngai Pāho. A contribution towards the eligible costs of recording a bilingual single, creating video content to promote the single, and other promotional costs	Up to \$14,000	Minimum 25% reo Māori overseen by language expert	1	30	14	46%
NEW MUSIC PASIFIKA	A contribution towards the eligible costs of recording a single, creating video content to promote the single, and other promotional costs	Up to \$10,000	Pasifika Artists	2	70	20	21%
NEW MUSIC KIDS	A contribution towards the eligible costs of recording a Children's single, creating video content to promote the single, and other promotional costs	Between \$2,500 and \$10,000	Music aimed towards rangatahi aged 14 and under	2	30	11	40%
PAN ASIAN	A contribution towards the eligible costs of recording a single, creating video content to promote the single, and other promotional costs	Up to \$14,000	Pan Asian Artists	One off round	115	15	10%



SUMMARY OF SECTOR FEEDBACK

NEW MUSIC DEVELOPMENT

- Let applications for New Music Development funding be driven by artists
- Allow room for artists to develop their work with other collaborators, not only producers
- Remunerate artists, as well as collaborators, for their time
- Give artists access to clear, objective information about splits, producer shares, ongoing costs and other administrative responsibilities arising from collaborations
- Include a layer of business development to ensure that artists understand the basic nature and processes of the industry they're entering
- Create a Waiata Māori stream for this fund in partnership with Te Māngai Pāho

NEW MUSIC SINGLE

- Allow PR budgets to be spent on international promotion so that artists can reach their fullest potential audience communities
- Create an upper limit for artists who no longer need funding, and for major labels, to relieve some pressure from the fund
- Remove drawdown milestones and allow the grant to be paid out upfront and then reported on retrospectively, to remove unnecessary financial and administrative pressure on artists
- Add extra-musical criteria that help to identify motivation and long term career potential: Drive, Capability, Vision, Support and Readiness
- Populate panels with greater ethnic, gender and musical diversity, and seek out current, relevant musical expertise and audience insight
- Fund fewer singles
- Instead, tier funding so that artists at different career points are fairly assessed and appropriately supported: Tier 1 – Establishing (\$2-\$10K) / Tier 2 – (\$10-\$25K)
- Allow greater flexibility around how the grants are spent to meet the changing needs of artists
- Replace notions of Niche and Mainstream with pure musical quality, global audience potential (with genre and diversity taken into account) and social context
- Make video an optional spend
- Allow more flexibility within video spending to account for the abundance of multi-media content (especially live performance) that artists are now required to create
- Implement a Quick Response Grant for one-off opportunities that are time-dependent
- Offer feedback to unsuccessful applicants
- Include a layer of business development for artists and ensure they are connected to industry bodies and networks, as well as to business knowledge & planning

NEW MUSIC PROJECT

- Allow PR budgets to be spent on international promotion so that artists can reach their fullest potential audience communities
- Remove drawdown milestones
- Increase the amount of money given to New Music Project funding in order to pay infrastructure providers more fairly
- Enshrine a Creative Fee for artists, and a Project Management fee for managers in addition to increasing the overall size of the grant
- Make video an optional spend
- Implement a Quick Response Grant for one-off opportunities that are time-dependent
- Investigate the disparity between NZ On Air's Music and Screen funding, with a view to resourcing music more fairly and realistically
- Include a layer of business development to ensure that artists have a strong understanding of music industry processes, including contracts and sync licensing
- Create a Waiata Māori stream for this fund in partnership with Te Māngai Pāho



WAIATA TAKITAHĪ

- Create a mātanga Māori role within NZ On Air
- Increase language capability within NZ On Air's music team, in order to facilitate greater independence when assessing Waiata Takitahi (and other potential) applications
- Expand the partnership offering with Te Māngai Pāho to include dedicated New Music Development and New Music Project funding for Waiata Māori
- Remove the drawdown milestones
- Make video an optional spend
- Support the development of Māori music industry infrastructure
- Allow PR budgets to be spent on international promotion so that artists can reach their fullest potential audience communities
- Include a layer of kaupapa-led business development to ensure that NZ On Air is better connected to, and better informing, Māori artists in and beyond the urban centres
- Expand the size of the grant to include a Creative Fee for artists

NEW MUSIC PASIFIKA

- Take into account the different ways in which Pasifika people deal with administration and handle budgets in both the application and reporting phases of funding
- Remove the drawdown milestones
- Make video an optional spend
- Consider other ways in which Pasifika applications can be presented - with a focus on creation and intent rather than solely budget and audience outcomes
- Offer business development alongside grants so that Pasifika artists have support to manage resources and work within industry frameworks
- Explore a collaboration with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples to ensure that Pasifika worldviews are strategically represented in NZ On Air's Pasifika funding stream
- Allow PR budgets to be spent on international promotion so that artists can reach their fullest potential audience communities
- Help to build Pasifika industry infrastructure so that Pasifika people are represented and visible, and so artists can seek guidance from other Pasifika people
- Expand the size of the grant to include a Creative Fee for artists

NEW MUSIC PAN ASIAN

- Continue the Pan-Asian funding offering
- Allow PR budgets to be spent on international promotion so that artists can reach their fullest potential audience communities
- Remove the drawdown milestones
- Make video an optional spend
- Expand the size of the grant to include a Creative Fee for artists
- Include a layer of business development to connect artists to industry networks and organisations



NEW MUSIC KIDS

- Ensure that access is available to the New Music Development and New Music Project funds for Children's writers
- Allow PR budgets to be spent on international promotion so that artists can reach their fullest potential audience communities
- Remove the drawdown milestones
- Make video an optional spend
- Expand the size of the grant to include a Creative Fee for artists
- Advocate for the prioritisation of Music Education

NEW TRACKS

- Reduce the number of songs on the New Tracks playlist
- Target songs towards their specific audience communities rather than presenting the whole list to all people
- Consider mood or genre specific NZ On Air playlists to account for current trends in music consumption

MUSIC SHOWCASES

- Hold regional showcases and take industry representatives to see artists and network in their home environments
- Open up Showcases to all-ages and invite potential audiences for the artists, rather than just industry representatives
- Consider school's tours for featured artists

MUSIC FEATURES

- Research whether paying NZME and Mediaworks owned stations to feature local music is generating tangible results for those featured artists
Explore whether that money can instead be redirected into existing artists' funding streams, or into a new targeted Export stream
- Increase pressure on broadcasters to give meaningful airplay to local music

NEW MUSIC EXPORT (PROPOSED)

- Create an Export stream for a small number of proven, high potential artists who are poised to make a global impact
- Work in collaboration with their teams, and across industry, to give a concerted push that can help them break through to the next level



NEW MUSIC DEVELOPMENT

“If you're an artist, you have to rely on the producer to get the funding. That gives the producer a lot of power. Is there an artist focused version of that?”

Producer

The New Music Development fund is designed to support the development of new songs from Emerging Artists in collaboration with Music Producers. Funding subsidises the costs of production, songwriting, and studio time to craft new songs and bodies of work. \$6,000 for the creation of two demos is paid to the Producer. There are two rounds per year with an average of 65 people applying for 15 grants per round.

The job description of a producer is incredibly broad. It ranges from sonic sculpting to beat-making, from arranging to composing songs, and from supporting the creation of music to directing it. We have an abundance of incredible producers in Aotearoa and they're doing transformational work in our industry – giving artists unique and definitive sounds, writing collaboratively, and releasing music of their own. Radio programmers note that the development of our producers in recent years has resulted in songs that are more polished and competitive in the commercial space.

Generally, people feel that the New Music Development stream is good for emerging artists and an important first step on the funding pathway. The collaborative focus of the stream allows artists and producers to build creative relationships in an environment with minimal financial pressure, and to learn from each other. The artist can explore and take risks – they can experiment with sounds and styles that they might not otherwise have the skills to conjure, they have a sounding board and a potential champion. The producer is able to help an artist discover and realise their voice – and they too have an opportunity to develop skills that will help them navigate other collaborations they undertake, and gather insight that they can apply to other artists. The producer and the artist could also discover an enduring creative partnership through the process. It's a mutually beneficial situation.

The producers who participate in this stream all take vastly different approaches to working with artists. One producer may have a home studio and therefore the grant will pay for their time, ideas and expertise. Another producer might be part of a collective, offering access to a spectrum of creative people and tools that the grant supports. Another producer may use the grant to employ additional songwriters or collaborators. Yet another producer will work with an artist beyond the creation of the agreed demos, and continue to invest in the relationship as a long-term collaborator and mentor with no further payment.



MC Tali





Chelsea Jade

"If you're working in this world you tend to be charitable. It goes with the territory. We do whatever we can to help each other and we want to see each other succeed. I'm doing a lot of stuff for the person I'm mentoring that I'm not getting paid for."

Producer

However, although the New Music Development fund does enable emerging artists to work with producers they might not otherwise be able to afford to collaborate with, the artists don't drive the application process and neither do they receive any payment from it themselves. Some people question why only the producer's time is valued.

Others have expressed concern that New Music Development funding has served to artificially inflate producers' earning expectations – making them less, not more, accessible to artists who are invariably the last (or least likely) to be paid, no matter what funding stream they're in.

"I'm seeing producer fees go up to the point where it's too expensive for an artist to achieve continuity across a body of work. We've put so much focus on the role of a producer for an emerging artist... we've been told that producers are critical... there's been a lot of advocacy in that space... but are they, in every case?" Manager

"Some of our artists find that it's more economically viable to work with overseas producers, because they're not working in an environment that's propped up by funding... their fees and expectations are more aligned to the reality of what artists can actually pay." Independent Label

"Everyone has a different rate and values their time differently. When producers know that artists are funded, they charge more. If artists are self-funded, producers offer other options." Producer

Artist development doesn't necessarily need to involve a producer at all – unless that's what the artist wants. In a commercial environment that's increasingly driven by an artist's lo-fi personality – where not only audiences, but also artists, are valuing multi-media content with an unpolished, DIY aesthetic – some artists want to develop their work independently of producers, produce themselves, or work with mentors and collaborators from other parts of the industry.



Greater clarity for artists about who owns the masters paid for by the funding is vital to this stream. Although NZ On Air makes it clear in their contract documentation that the artist retains all necessary intellectual property rights for work funded by this scheme, there are still questions in some people's minds about where the artist's financial responsibility to the producer ends if – for instance – stems from the demos go on to be used in final recordings.

This is an important business dimension for emerging artists to understand, but emerging artists aren't necessarily resourced to cope with it at such an early career point. And many are suspicious of the industry's mechanisms and wishing to work outside them. What objective guidance is available to the artist to navigate these issues independently of a producer who is (no matter how good their intentions are) ultimately in a position of power over them?

“Young people don't trust the industry. It doesn't communicate with them. They avoid it.” Local Industry

New Music Development is the ideal point in the funding pathway to build trust, networks, and address fundamental knowledge gaps that haven't yet been covered by an artist's education or experience. This is an opportunity to empower artists with correct information.

Adding an element of business development to NMD grants would ensure that the artists coming through the fund understand the nature of the business decisions they're making as part of the process of creation – as well as give them a better understanding of the wider industry and its nature, so that they can determine whether it's a space they're suited to, or can flourish in.

“Developing artists beyond just being able to write a song, record it and put it out is so important. It's in all of our best interests to support people toward longevity and career fulfillment.” Local Industry

“It's all very well to give someone money for a track, but there needs to be more support throughout. What is it people say?... don't give someone a fish, teach them how to fish.”

Local Industry



Bic Runga



NEW MUSIC SINGLE



Navvy

“With lots of emerging artists going up against established artists, New Music Single just doesn’t feel like an even playing field.”

Producer

The New Music Single fund exists to support the creation of New Zealand songs that have the potential to connect with a sizeable audience via broadcast and online platforms. It provides a \$10,000 funding contribution towards the costs of recording a single and/or making video content to support the single’s release, along with promotional activity to enhance the discoverability of the funded song.

There is **huge** demand and competition for this stream. Five rounds take place during the year and 35 artists are chosen from approximately 200 applicants for each round. Applications come from across the spectra of genre, style and experience. NZ On Air aims to fund 60% mainstream artists and 40% niche artists. They have also placed a strategic focus on supporting womxn in the industry.

The NZ On Air Music Diversity Report 2022 ^[19] observed “a notable increase in demand for funding through all Music funding streams” and a 17.5% increase in New Music Single applications between 2021 and 2022.

A common frustration with this fund is the wide range of artists at very different points in their careers, and with very different creative and audience aspirations, competing with each other for the same money.

For example, artists who are building their audiences (or who are excelling in niche genres where the audience is naturally limited by population size) wonder how they can compete with artists who regularly fill stadiums (and indeed, whether artists with that degree of profitability need any further funding at all).

Similarly, people wonder why artists signed to major record labels are applying to the same fund as those who are completely independent. Do powerful corporate entities with global catalogues not have enough resources to support the artists they sign? And if major labels can’t support their artists... what hope does anyone else in the industry have?





Deva Mahal

Major labels in New Zealand argue that their international parent companies don't support them to prioritise local artists, and that without NZ On Air funding they couldn't invest in the local environment. Others in the industry counter that propping up the local activity of profitable international corporations is not the job of the New Zealand taxpayer. Still others believe that funding offers independence to signed artists who have to recoup the money from their labels eventually anyway.

"I'd rather see major labels get funding support than see local artists go into further debt." *Manager*

There used to be a co-investment requirement for New Music Single funding which NZ On Air removed after the 2019 Profile of Creative Professionals revealed the paucity of income from music careers. Could the pressure on New Music Single funding be relieved by at least requiring non-recoupable co-investment from major labels who seek funding for their artists?

Emerging artists report that the criteria for funding are hard to meet, but emerging artists are not the reason the New Music Single fund exists. They should, in principle, be covered by the New Music Development fund which currently offers financial support to producers, but which could also extend that offering to artists – offering a range of grant amounts for the independent or collaborative development of new work.

NZ On Air recently allowed for a 10% Artist Creation fee to be drawn from the funding an artist receives. Many artists choose not to take it and instead invest the full sum of the grant into their projects. But while co-investment and the ability to defer the creation fee is a possibility for some, it isn't for everyone. **Giving artists the ability to pay themselves is valuable and facilitates greater access to industry opportunities for a wider range of people.**

"The audience probably isn't there for all of the music that gets funded, but maybe that's secondary to participation, and to reinforcing the sector... supporting all of the areas that wouldn't be supported if it was a totally commercially driven environment."

Local Industry



“The question of ‘what is success and how do we measure it?’ has to be dealt with – because as brilliant as it is to give people money to make music, it’s funding into a void if only a handful of songs have an outcome.”

Local Industry

More than anything, people want clarity and detail about what NZ On Air single funding is intended to achieve, and what a successful outcome really is in the current environment.

The New Music Single online application has 30 criteria, ten of which must be met to qualify to apply for funding. The criteria are designed to find out if the artist has online audience numbers, a broadcast track record, a media presence, a live performance track record, industry support, and recognition for their work. Artists need to have done some work on their own and developed an audience that funding can help them to grow (rather than to create from scratch). Around 200 applications meet this criteria in every round.

External assessment panels are used to decide who is given New Music Single funding (as well as New Music Development, Waiata Takitahi, Pasifika, Pan Asian, and Kids music funding). This process was introduced after Chris Caddick’s 2010 music funding review, in order to address industry perceptions that NZ On Air were gatekeepers of the funding.

Assessing 200 songs is no small task. NZ On Air appoints seven people – always including one person from NZ On Air, one person from Commercial Radio and one person from Student Radio – with the remainder made up of a mix of other professionals from across the music industry. The panel is asked to listen to each song, review the supplementary information provided with each, and vote for their Top 30 applicants.

Their instructions are to:

- Identify the best songs, which are most likely to have a strong audience appeal
- Aim for a balance of 60% mainstream artists and 40% niche artists
- Search actively for some new artists to balance the support for established artists
- Keep in mind a good representation across gender, ethnicity and genre diversity



Rob Ruha





Coterie

“Get the panels as diverse as possible. People vote for what they like – they make decisions based on their own identities and their own filters. Depending who is on them, panels favour certain genres and styles that aren't always representative of what can succeed. Get external experts. Look at what's happening around the song... the socials, the context.”

Manager

The panel then meets to discuss and align their decisions.

The decision making criteria are broad, and the intent is to ensure that a correspondingly broad range of work can be supported. NZ On Air has been asked repeatedly over the years to fund more music beyond the mainstream, and they've responded to those requests. Panels focus on the songs themselves, and on ensuring that the songs supported in each round constitute a fair representation of the music being made in Aotearoa – and the people making it – in the given moment.

People generally feel that external panels are a good and fair way to assess the applications, but there's an array of opinion as to who should be on them, and people also wonder how much capacity the panel members have to assess the applications in any detail when there are so many to process.

“How does everyone get a fair chance of being listened to with so many applications? There's a group of really busy people deciding the fate of a track. Just having to listen to two hundred songs... that alone is a recipe for stuff to be missed. In a round I assessed, we almost missed someone who went on to do incredible things. There must be something that can be done to help that.” Manager

Some people believe that what's missing from the panels is representation from the audience. Others think creative expertise is lacking. Some want panels to be appointed for longer periods of time, for consistency. Others want more variety – perhaps even genre specific rounds – to protect against perceived favouritism, or bias based on personal musical aesthetics or commercial priorities.

People also question the presence of commercial radio representatives on panels, because the range of what they can realistically support on their own platforms is so specific, and so limited – and their day-job is not to choose music based on quality, but on what they think will research well with audiences.



“What’s the plan for the artist pathway... is there one? Is there direction over time, rather than round by round decision making?”

Local Industry

“The New Music Single fund exists to support the creation of New Zealand songs that have the potential to connect with a sizeable audience via broadcast and online platforms.” ^[22]

Decision making criteria asks panels to search actively for some newer artists to balance the support for established artists – and also asks panels to take diversity into account. Many people (especially younger artists) believe that success with funding is directly proportional to name recognition and also subject to favouritism, given the presence of industry stakeholders on the panels. The request for some newer artists to be chosen is intended to ensure that it’s not just the same people getting funded over and over again. Our industry landscape is so small that it’s impossible to avoid vested interests and existing business relationships and/or friendships when panels are selected, but every effort is made to make sure that there is balance, transparency and robust discussion when songs are chosen.

The primary focus is placed on the song itself – its quality and potential as a standalone creation. This means there isn’t a (consciously) overarching plan for the career trajectory or sustainability of the artist when funding decisions are made. However, people in the industry share an almost unanimous conviction that good songs aren’t enough anymore and that the current decision-making criteria needs to take the long term into account. Audiences and fans aren’t created overnight so it seems counterintuitive not to consider where an artist is headed and how they plan to get there, when considering their present offering.

“Quick wins can’t be the measures of success. A quick win is not a career.” Manager

Ideally, artists should be able to aspire towards careers where they no longer need to be funded, but that’s almost an impossible dream in Aotearoa – and it’s getting harder to achieve every day. Just a small handful of bands and artists do well enough here to survive without funding - but, because they are consistently delivering a sizeable audience they’re perpetually eligible for it, even though a \$10,000 NMS grant will mean something very different to them than it will to anyone else (emerging or established). NZ On Air doesn’t means test its funding recipients. But could there be a way to relieve pressure on resources by creating an off-ramp for those rare cases when funding is no longer a necessity – and by taking career sustainability, rather than the potential success of a single song, into account?



Julia Deans





Finn Andrews

“There’s a whole lot of artists who can tick 10 boxes in the criteria, but who still have no idea. Numbers and the metrics don’t show deep audience engagement... it’s easy to get numbers – it’s much harder to sell tickets and get people to show up. There’s a development arc that’s missing. In terms of criteria, there has to be something more about what an engaged audience really is, and the development pathway of the artist.”

Manager

Decision makers in the industry are now looking beyond the immediate when they decide which artists to support, sign, pitch or collaborate with. Increasingly, they employ extramusical criteria to identify long-term career sustainability. They consider qualities like:

- **DRIVE:** Is the artist motivated to engage with their audience?
- **CAPABILITY:** Does the artist have the business knowledge and tools they need to support their music?
- **VISION:** Does the artist have a creative vision or plan beyond their immediate project?
- **SUPPORT:** Does the artist have an effective and informed team to help them achieve their vision?
- **READINESS:** Is the artist ready and prepared for the market?

Music is also transcending distinctions like niche and mainstream, which – in the context of a platform like TikTok generating a plethora of 30 second tracks in every conceivable style, complete with nonalphanumeric titles and slowed down, verbed out remixes – seem quaintly out of date. Young audiences are infinitely more curious and open-minded than the older ones gorging on back-catalogues. Young audiences think in moods, vibes, scenes and moments. Concepts like ‘niche’ and ‘mainstream’ lack the nuance and granularity that’s now driving the delivery of music to them, so applying those constructs to funding decisions potentially creates more barriers than it removes.

“Niche IS mainstream.” Manager

Perhaps it would be better to take a broader view of music as something that can be absolutely anything; and the audience as individuals in an integrated global network. If we really want to keep pace with change, perhaps we should even reconsider our notion of what a ‘song’ is, and let pure music, artist identity, and social context be the measures by which we determine the potential of music in the current environment.



Because the landscape for our artists is changing so quickly, because there is so much pressure on funding, and because the current funding streams are so broad in their scope, many people in our industry are suggesting that a tiered system within NMS – with one tier for emerging / establishing artists, one tier for establishing / established ones, and different funding scales and criteria for each – would better serve the spectrum of applicants and their range of needs.

They're also suggesting that new artists could be removed from the NMS stream altogether and placed within a redesigned New Music Development stream at the beginning of the funding pathway, with an increased artist focus. And at the end of the funding pathway, a new supercharged export stream could be introduced (potentially repurposing money from Music Features) to focus on a small number of artists with established international demand and give them a concerted push to break into the global market.

The stages of funding might then look something like this:

New Music Development / \$2,000 – \$7,000

New and emerging artists, developing creative identity and new work in collaboration with producers or other creative mentors

↓

New Music Single 1 / \$2,000 - \$10,000

Emerging and establishing artists, creating music and visual content to engage with a growing audience

↓

New Music Single 2 / \$15,000 - \$25,000

Establishing and established artists, creating music and visual content to continue building a local and international audience

↓

New Music Project / \$25,000 - \$55,000

Artists with strong audience engagement and professional infrastructure, expanding their bodies of work to meet local and international demand

↓

New Music Export / discretionary and with co-investment

A small number of artists poised to make a global impact receive a collaborative / aligned industry push to help them break through



Amila



“Artists have to build worlds, brands, and identities that people want to engage with... that other people want to be part of. To do that they need to be inviting people in through their other interests... the communities and groups they’re part of, food, exercise... whatever. We explore all these different playgrounds with our artists. People connect with more than a song... they connect with everything around it.”

Independent Label

In today’s audience driven marketplace, an artist’s ability to relate to their audience, offer access and insight into their day-to-day lives, and to engage authentically in multiple creative dimensions, is a primary determinant of success. But this comes with a profound increase in pressure and workload for artists.

“My artist’s whole life is filmed. Everything they do. They are the product. On stage. Backstage. Waking up. Getting food. Rocking around. It’s been hard for them to get used to that... but they’re awesome and natural and funny as well, and they’ve learned how valuable those things are. We create a huge amount of content... we get heaps of engagement and lots of new fans through the content we make... but there often isn’t a note of music in it.” Manager

“The pressure on me as an artist to engage with the audience completely overshadows my creativity, to the point where promoting myself online has become a full time job. Writing actual music is what I have the least time for.” Artist

In order to give their audiences what they want, artists in turn want to have more determination over the visual content they make to accompany their singles. They’d like to be able to film live performances that aren’t tied to the funded master recording, they want to make promotional visual content that’s adjacent to their songs, not necessarily integrated with them. Sometimes it’s more useful for them to create non-musical content that’s designed to promote the song, than it is to make a music video for it.

Artists want more flexibility around how they spend money on music too. An NMS grant could potentially pay for more than one song, which would better enable artists to work and release at the speed of the market.

“Our artists are fast moving. They work single to single. They release something every four or five weeks.” Manager



Georgia Lines





Dera Meelan

"When I get a glimmer of light, I need to be able to jump on it and scale it. Immediately. "

Manager

Even if the funding tiers can be expanded and made more flexible in order to meet artists' needs over time, there's still the issue of responsiveness to change in the moment. Opportunity doesn't necessarily operate on the same timescale as a funding round.

Creating quickfire grants could potentially deliver career-changing results for people who need to react immediately to opportunity. Access to a contestable resource that's available at short notice could transform the outcome of a project.

"Opportunity moves faster than bureaucracy does. There needs to be a way to provide for sudden opportunity. At the moment, people can't access funding in the moment it's needed. There needs to be a dynamic response." Local Industry

And then there are the drawdowns. This is the administrative process by which NZ On Air understandably tries to ensure that taxpayer money is being spent in the way artists have promised it will be, and how it makes them accountable for the use of their funds.

When an artist's application for funding is successful, they have two months in which to accept the grant. A percentage of the grant is then paid to them upon signing. They have six months to complete the single. The remainder of the grant is paid on a reimbursement basis – if an artist can't make their invoices align with the original funding request, the grant is placed on hold. Artists spend their own money upfront, and then they have to wait until the project is finished before they can reimburse themselves.

Everyone struggles with this process. They would love to see drawdown milestones removed.

"Drawdowns are a low trust model. I complete the projects, I don't have time to do the paperwork, it gets pushed and before you know it, you're out of pocket. It's not like I don't need the income but I'm too busy working out how to generate more income to do the admin." Artist

Ultimately, the best measure of whether a creative project has been well executed is the creation itself.





Fazerdaze

"It's moving so quick you can't really pin it. Funding has to be fast. And readily accessible. Content creators know what they're doing. Instead of having to spend all your time explaining yourself to other people, you want people to trust you. I have ideas on the fly that weren't in the plan. I change my mind. Funding requires a built out plan but I haven't even thought two weeks ahead. I have ideas... I respond to them."

Artist

The reconciliation of invoices against projected costs may tick administrative boxes, but this gives no insight into the creative success of the work, and it allows no room for the unpredictability of the creative process.

- **Administration Heavy:** the administration takes time and attention away from creating the work that the grant is supposed to support. Many artists don't have managers or support staff to help them. They're also usually not being paid to create and are juggling other jobs and family priorities. Time is a critical factor for them
- **Complex:** the drawdown process is complicated. Sometimes back and forth between NZ On Air and the artist is required if a line-item is contentious. Completing the drawdown process requires specific administrative skills that not all musically minded people excel at
- **Discriminatory:** not all musically talented, motivated and hardworking people with the potential for a strong and sustainable music career have a) a strong educational background in administration and accounting, b) easy access to a home computer or subscription software or, c) people who can help them in the absence of those things
- **Inflexible:** plans change over the course of a project, but the funding contract doesn't always allow for those changes
- **Unaffordable:** not all artists can afford to pay for goods and services in advance. That's why they need funding

"I think the whole drawdown system is convoluted. It would be better to just say 'here's 50% upfront and you get the rest when you're finished' instead of making people submit all the invoices etc. The process of making music doesn't work like that." Artist



“There's too much music. There's so much funding going to produce so much music. Three songs out of each NMD grant, 175 singles out of the five NMS rounds. Record numbers of applications. And all of these people have dreams... they all think that they can be the unicorn.”

Manager

Finally, having thought about the almost 200 New Music Singles that are funded over the course of a year, we also need to think about the 825 artists who are not funded over the course of a year. How can we build the resilience of artists who have vision and something to say, who are motivated and working hard, but who aren't quite there yet in a hyper-competitive and oversaturated environment?

“The rejection levels are so high but there's no direct interaction with the unsuccessful participants. There isn't the capacity at NZOA to offer that... no input into how future applications could have more likelihood of being funded... the ability to talk things through.” Producer

Rejection comes hand in hand with a music career. This industry environment is not for everybody. But some of the artists who don't succeed on their first, second or third try, may still go on to succeed on their fourth try and then go on to build incredible careers and bodies of work. What can be done to encourage and inform those artists? What can be done to offer hope, but not false hope?

There's resounding acknowledgement for the accessibility and care that NZ On Air's music staff offer to the many people who interact with them. There's also understanding throughout the industry that NZ On Air has a limited number of staff who are stretched, like everyone else in the industry, and doing important work. But artists also want to know what they can do better when they're not funded. They want to understand why.

“There need to be reasons for rejection. You don't want to open up a debate with everyone, but you do need to give them the option of learning from mistakes in order to grow. Otherwise you're not empowering or educating anyone. It just causes conspiratorial thinking and anxiety. Anxiety is resolved by information. Anyone not getting funded is feeling shit and anxious about it and wondering if they have a future. There's no concrete next step. Give that feedback – offer concrete action for better outcomes. If you didn't pass your warrant of fitness and you asked why, and the inspector said 'I can't tell you'... what would you do?... blow your tyres up and fix the rear passenger seatbelt?” Manager



Foley



NEW MUSIC PROJECT



Aldous Harding

NZ On Air's New Music Project funding supports the production and promotion of new multi-song music projects and is designed for artists who have an established track record of significant audience and broadcast / online outcomes in New Zealand.

NZ On Air offers grants of between \$10,000 and \$40,000 on an 80% reimbursement basis – the music company / applicant must co-invest a minimum of 20% of the costs of completing the Project. Applicants are invited to apply, or they can submit an Expression of Interest. There are four rounds per year with an average of 20 applicants applying for 10 – 12 projects per round.

New Music Project is the aspirational stream for artists. The pathway that leads to this point is fundamentally important because it should have served to self-select and set up clear expectations of what's required from artists now that a more substantial investment is being made.

A central question for the New Music Single stream is whether or not it's serving to provide a clear pathway towards this funding. A central question for New Music Project funding is... what happens next?

According to NZ On Air's Pre-Application criteria, artists should arrive at the Project funding point with:

- **Strong audience engagement:** NZ On Air wants to see demonstrated interest and engagement from the artist's audience across broadcast and online platforms – a minimum of 5,000 fans
- **Track record:** acknowledging the particulars of genre, NZ On Air indicates that they expect one or more of an artist's songs to have achieved at least 100,000 streams and / or high rotate radio airplay
- **Third Party Support / Project Management:** in order to qualify for this funding stream, applicants must have the support of a third-party, professional music organisation – this might be a New Zealand-based record company (independent or major); or a music management company, or an experienced music publicity and/or music label services company

One thing that's absent from this list, for the artist, is business knowledge. At this point in their careers, artists most definitely need commercial understanding in order to negotiate the business dimensions of their work. Without that they are at best ill-prepared, and at worst ripe for exploitation. Of course, many artists aren't inclined towards the business sides of their careers – it's not always how creative brains are wired – but the knowledge has to come from somewhere.



“If you can create a healthy ecosystem, the art will follow. Build infrastructure and communities around artists in a wider sense. I get frustrated when I see artists working by themselves and their projects disappear – because no one can do everything by themselves.”

Independent Label

This is where an experienced team of professionals with viable careers, networks and resources of their own is so important. Ideally, an artist needs ALL of the professional organisations listed in NMP’s pre-application criteria... management, publicity AND some form of invested, organised distribution infrastructure, in order to get their music to a meaningful audience.

If the tertiary institutions that would normally deliver knowledge are closing down and their collective wisdom is scattering, if information is already decentralized across an increasingly complex industry that doesn’t quite have a single or succinct point of truth, and if pieces of the career puzzle are located with different people in different places on different websites within different organisations... how can artists ever hope to solve the Da Vinci Code-level mystery of where to find the holy career grail... unless they have specialist support.

But what is the current state of the specialist support available in Aotearoa?

In truth, it’s at the limit of its endurance. It too is still recovering from Covid. It too is dealing with oversaturation, drowning in demands upon its time and resources, dealing with a scarcity of broadcast and media opportunities, and trying to stretch finite budgets to their absolute limits.

“During Covid, artists looked to their managers to be unwavering. There was an expectation that we were always there and always strong... that the artists were the ones on the rollercoaster and we were somehow, miraculously, not. But we’re all feeling it!” Manager

“The media landscape has changed so significantly. It’s so hard to get any coverage for the music being released. Radio is SO hard. We work with what we have. We’re inundated with enquiries to publicise work and we try to do as much as we can, but at what point do we say ‘there’s only so much we can do’?” Publicist



Harper Finn





Kaylee Bell

“The team that’s available for artists to put around them is being diluted because we’re all trying to do so many things. Everyone is multi-tasking. Managers are bombarded. Publicists are bombarded. It’s not sustainable.”

Manager

There’s also the question of whether the grant amounts themselves are enough, and whether the number of grants offered can be adjusted across both New Music Project and New Music Single to allow for better outcomes.

“False hope is one of the biggest problems in the NZ market. How many recordings can we really justify if the focus is only on a New Zealand audience? How much development is it responsible to invest in without any view to the market at the end of it?” Local Industry

Most people feel that NZ On Air’s budget would be more effectively spent funding fewer artists across the board (especially in the NMS space), and investing more into what is funded – to really empower success for those artists who have demonstrated their ability to make great work and connect with an audience.

Artists can apply for New Music Single funding up to three times in a year. In 2022, five artists received the maximum three NMS grants – matching or exceeding the degree of funding that 10 artists received in the New Music Project stream; 29 artists received NMS funding twice; and four artists received both NMS and NMP funding (although none of them received a total amount that exceeded NMP’s upper limit of \$40,000).

Is there a more suitable way to invest in those artists who are pushing the boundaries of the funding offering. If artists are applying to both funds, or applying consecutively and spontaneously without a plan that isn’t dependent on the possibility of funding, this places pressure on the fund and the assessment process too. With many artists now releasing music more frequently to meet audience demand, are there mutually beneficial alternatives to a scattergun funding approach? For example can artists have room to structure a New Music Project as a stream of 12 singles, released once a month onto their socials, with no video or publicity spend?



“Because all of us are subsidising the creation of work in one way or another, NZ On Air is not actually seeing the true, reflective cost of projects because we structure our applications to make sure they’re accepted, and then we rely on favours and in-kind support from across our networks to complete our projects to a high standard.”

Manager

\$40,000 is a lot of money. No one wants to suggest otherwise. No one wants to seem ungrateful. But there’s a general consensus that it’s simply not enough for a multi-song project – especially if artists aren’t being paid; especially if it’s also going to the creation of visual content; and especially if it’s paying for infrastructure too.

In the music industry, payment expectations are lower than they are in other industries. There’s an ‘understanding’ of the inherent financial shortcomings of the sector and people adjust their fees and invoices accordingly. Artists are asked to play for free. Often they do so willingly. People work longer hours because they’re creatively invested in the outcome, or because they believe in the project. It becomes self-perpetuating. As pressure increases on the economy, and music is forced to compete with the hard costs of living, income expectations become lower still.

“A lot of the musicians I work with are friends. They’re getting mates rates. Is the grant enough? I’m grateful because it’s there. But when you start allocating it out, there always needs to be more.” Artist

“I don’t think the budgets are sufficient in the face of the cost of living crisis or the rate of inflation. Everything we do is more expensive now, but the funding streams don’t reflect that. As an example... we’re still playing rescheduled gigs that we committed to before the pandemic. The fees we agreed on haven’t changed, but the cost of flights has tripled in the meantime.” Artist

“Every stakeholder is screaming for more money. I nudge the budgets around to try and fit everything in, but the current demand for content means that you have to be really creative. It’s a challenge to make the money go far enough to have an ongoing impact.” Manager



Imugi





Church & AP

"I got project funding for my most recent album and I wanted to do the whole video thing professionally. We got a camera crew in, hired a venue, the whole shebang. It was a lot of money for something that was seen less than a DIY of me being a dick on TikTok"

Artist

In the current environment, video creation is the one space where many artists seem to be able to spend less money without compromising their audience engagement. That's because audiences – at the moment – are more interested in unpolished content that reveals something true about they artists they relate to, than in content that obscures those artists and places them beyond reach.

Long form videos are expensive and time consuming to make. In a hand-held, body-cam, short-form dominated environment they're not necessary for a lot of artists (although, they remain aspirational, and the demand for video also depends on genre, and audience). Nonetheless, NZ On Air requires a portion of each New Music Single and Project grant to be spent on video creation as a condition of funding, to promote the work – and many people who apply for funding think they are required to engage professional videographers when, in fact, they can allocate funding to create visual content themselves.

"Self-created content can connect you further than anything else, at almost no expense. The publicity we've paid for has made very little impact compared to the result an artist gets from just filming themselves and putting it on the socials." Independent Label

"We're in a world of prolific shortform content – and occasional, very specific longform content. Shortform content is about your audience wanting to share things with you. It communicates your vibe, your feel, your identity. Longform content should create a world. It's totally individual to each creator. That's how artists find their communities. Then that contact converts into transactions, like streaming and ticket sales. Longform content is a way to tell a meaningful story – to make a statement. It has to be unique and interesting or there's no point."

Manager

"I think music grants favour the film industry. What they suggest paying the crew or the director is the same amount as the music producer would be paid. The budgets for video baffle me. \$10K on a one day shoot for a single video is excessive when you compare that to what you spend on the music. Those video singles definitely benefit directors and film crews more than they benefit artists." Artist



“At the moment, funding is developing and supporting studios, engineers, video makers, publicists and producers. Not artists. It's upside down. All of those things have become industries of their own while artists themselves are still not being served.”

Manager

As much as the music industry desperately needs infrastructure – management, promotion, production, marketing and publicity – many people in our industry believe that music grants go to everyone except artists, whose load just keeps on getting bigger no matter how much support they pay for. Perhaps it's misleading to see artists' names on a list of funded projects because it makes everyone think (consciously or unconsciously) that they're the ones getting all the money. We hear about the \$40,000 grant and we instantly attach that to the artist's public persona... the one that plays to cheering fans, owns the stage, inhabits beautiful photographic environments, goes to events, wears great clothes and exudes swag. Maybe artists are too good at getting us to believe their press (even though that's exactly what they need us to do in order to keep engaging us as their audience) and too capable of convincing us that their creative lives are as glamorous and effortless as they make it seem.

In 2022, NZ On Air gave \$4,823,702 to 'artists' via New Music Development, New Music Single, New Music Project, Waiata Takitahi, New Music Pasifika and New Music Kids. Unless those artists specifically carved out their optional 10% rather than investing it into their work (and many didn't)... they weren't paid anything at all.

“They say you never get rich from selling your time. In the music industry you give away your time for free.” Artist

This degree of self-investment would be a reasonable proposition if artists were then able to take their body of work and generate income from it, but in the current industry environment that's much harder than it looks, and out of reach for many. The returns from streaming are negligible, the broadcast opportunities are scarce, the live circuit has been decimated, and the local audience is too small.

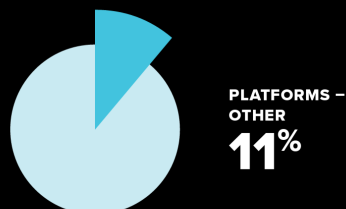
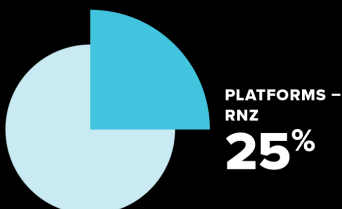
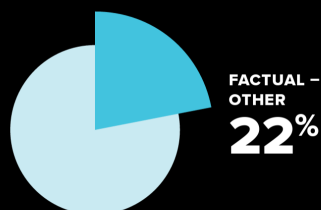
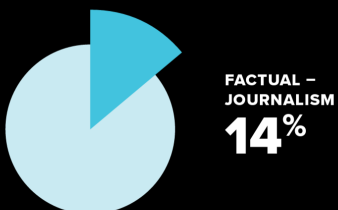
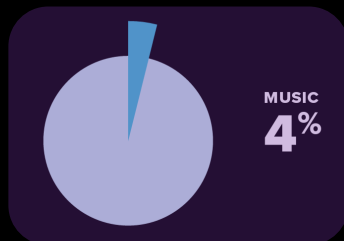
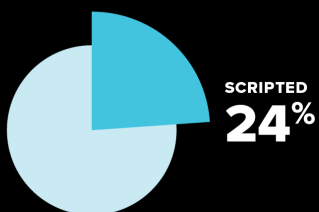
Arguments around who really fuels the machine of our industry are symptomatic of a single problem... there just isn't enough money to keep the whole thing running, full stop. And that brings us back to the question of what happens to all of the music we make... and how can we make our industry sustainable enough to fuel culture, ensure breadth and depth of artistic expression, and encourage experimentation and creative risk.



Chaii



NZ MEDIA FUND BUDGET SUMMARY



from NZ On Air's Statement of Performance Expectations YE 2023 [20]

"Music really is punching above its weight. Government gets huge bang for buck from music compared to screen. The imbalance of funding between music and screen is enormous."

Local Industry

One way to better resource NZ On Air's music funding initiatives could be to look towards the other space it operates in – screen.

Screen is undeniably better resourced than music, which takes up just 4% of NZ On Air's Media Fund. Putting the differences in scale between music and film aside, it seems that more money is invested into the screen sector's development processes and surrounding infrastructures than in music's – where the focus is firmly placed on creation, promotion and – funnily enough – screen production.

For instance, screenwriters are paid to develop scripts before they're green-lit for production – whereas songwriters aren't paid to develop songs before they're recorded. Production companies are funded to support and coordinate the creation of work... those production companies employ people and pay them salaries, and their Executives draw salaries too. There is no equivalent for the production / project management of music and there are certainly no salaries being paid to music producers, managers, or publicists.

Industry professionals working for a percentage of artist income, in an environment where artist income is so relentlessly low and unpredictable, are forced to take on an unsustainable roster of artists in order to survive, which in turn compromises the time and resources they can dedicate to each of those artists.

"Screen is supported from the point of creation onwards, via development. Music is not. Development builds a sustainable career." Local Industry

Music has pre-production and post-production phases just like screen – but those phases aren't recognised or resourced for music by NZ On Air in the way that they are for screen.

There's also the fact that music grants currently require a video spend. Music creators must spend money on visual content, and their ability to draw down the funds they need to reimburse themselves depends on their ability to provide invoices that confirm the visual spend they've committed to in their application. So even the 4% of funding allocated to music is supporting screen production.



“It’s hard to avoid the fact that the single biggest investor in contemporary NZ music doesn’t actually give money to the creators. It invests in the content around the music, it gives artists the ability to pay others, but it doesn’t really pay them. In the screen fund, the creators get paid... the writers and directors... they earn money for creating. But that’s not the case with music.”

Local Industry

Conversely, the understanding in the music industry is that screen productions have no similar requirement to account for music when they budget or deliver their outcomes and there is no collaboration between NZ On Air’s music and screen divisions when it comes to augmenting visual content with music.

When funded productions do employ NZ composers, there also seems to be an aversion to valuing music at the same level as other aspects of the production. Instead agreements are based on international industry business practices – despite the local environment having very different audience and budget realities. Some production companies who receive NZ On Air funding have gone so far as to mirror the overseas practice of forming a music publishing company so that composers are forced to assign them a percentage of their performance royalties (collected and distributed by APRA) as a condition of being hired to compose scores. Companies in the US, for example, pay higher upfront fees in exchange for those rights and royalties to balance the backend equation for composers. It would appear that local companies don’t.

The 2023 Profile of Creative Professionals shows that the average income for media production is \$46,800 compared to music’s \$28,800 ^[6]. This is still lower than the national average – but it’s approaching double that of music and is a direct reflection of the different levels of support offered to the two art forms that NZ On Air funds (and indeed, a reflection of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage’s level of support for the film sector as compared to the contemporary music sector too).

“Think about all of the incentives there are to bring international film and TV productions to New Zealand... we change employment law, we give tax rebates... NZ On Air is seeking international buy in and recognition on the screen side, so why aren’t they applying the same export thinking to music?” *Manager*

Perhaps NZ On Air’s screen funding is an in-house example of how development, creation and infrastructure might be equally supported in the music space, and then empowered to reach an international market.



The Phoenix Foundation



WAIATA TAKITAHĪ

“It’s been a ride. And a transformation. If you’d been away from Aotearoa for the past 5 years you would see a big change. I love the embrace of the language. I love seeing it becoming so natural and seamless to transition from one language to another.”

Local Industry

Waiata Takitahi is a collaborative fund between NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho, supporting the creation of songs that incorporate a minimum of 25% te reo Māori. It’s open to musicians from all backgrounds with a genuine interest in writing and recording waiata integrating te reo Māori, with an eye to distribution across mainstream audiences via online and broadcast platforms. It provides \$14,000 which can cover costs of recording, video content and promotion, and also be used to cover costs of te reo specialists or coaches to assist with the writing and recording of the songs. There is one round per year with an average of 30 people applying for 15 grants.

Over the past five years, decades of groundwork, investment and advocacy by Māori composers, musicians, and language experts have been coming to new levels of fruition. A growing tide of waiata reo Māori and waiata reo rua is flowing into the ears and imaginations of audiences here and around the world.

The Waiata Anthems project, launched in 2019, has so far enabled the creation of more than 100 new waiata as well as lyric videos and documentaries, harnessing the power of music to revitalise language and transform culture. Some of our most beloved artists across multiple genres have begun writing and releasing music in te reo Māori. We’re celebrating Māori public holidays (Matariki) and attending kaupapa led events (Te Tairāwhiti Arts Festival). Māori artists such as Teeks, Stan Walker and Paige are ‘mainstream’ successes. In 2021, the bilingual song ‘35’ by Ka Hao ft. Rob Rua went viral on TikTok around the world and hit #1 on the NZ Singles Chart.

At an industry level, acknowledgement of systemic inequality and commitment to building a bilingual music industry has seen three of our organisations create long-awaited space and resource for Māori leadership. In 2018, Toni Huata was appointed to the role of Kaihautū Puoro Māori – Director of Māori Music at SOUNZ. In 2020, Dame Hinewehi Mohi was appointed to the role of Pitau-whakarewa – Māori Membership Growth & Development Leader at APRA AMCOS. And in 2023, Sarah Owen was appointed to the role of Kairangaranga at Recorded Music New Zealand.



Kia Kaha te reo Māori Logo / Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori





Teeks

"It's great to see NZ On Air and Te Māngai Pāho co-funding waiata reo Māori. I think there's even more that can be done to collaboratively develop bilingual music. I'd like to see a whole spectrum of resource support – from the process of creation through to collaboration, performance, and ongoing promotion"

Local Industry

In 2020, Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air partnered to launch Waiata Takitahi. Since its inception, Waiata Takitahi has funded 42 te reo Māori and bilingual songs.

NZ On Air has a focus on music, and Te Māngai Pāho on te reo Māori. In a true partnership, each organisation is also invested in each other's outcomes – the full responsibility for promoting language revitalisation doesn't fall only to one organisation, and the full responsibility for promoting musical quality doesn't fall only to the other, because each is in a position to empower both. In 2019, Te Māngai Pāho appointed a leadership role in the contemporary music space – Mātanga Puoro, Nadia Marsh. People feel that the creation of a Māori leadership role within NZ On Air and the building of reo capability within the organisation would create balance and further empower the partnership between the two organisations – as well as adding to the spectrum of knowledge and expertise in the music industry as a whole.

"Because we're in an era of language revitalisation, Māori in the industry need to be demanding about the quality of te reo in waiata that's funded. But while Te Māngai Pāho might be comfortable doing that, perhaps NZ On Air isn't. Building that capacity within NZ On Air, so that they can also advocate and feed back with confidence, would make a big difference." Local Industry

"What I am witnessing is that the only cultural measure being valued in music is the grammatical accuracy of the language used in songs. We need Māori experts who are versed not only in te reo, but in tikanga and waiata Māori." Manager

The opportunity here is to further explore the creative potential of this partnership – to encourage bi-lingual collaborations led by both parties, and to expand the funding offering into the New Music Development and New Music Project spaces (as well as to embed the partnership into any new or restructured initiatives yet to be created).



“People in te ao Māori with the motivation and inclination to do stuff are so time poor. This has been a problem for a long time. We find ourselves so stretched to deliver what we’d love to deliver because there’s so much mahi to do and so few of us to do it.”

Local Industry

Many of the requests made by Māori artists, managers and industry practitioners echo the requests of the industry as a whole, including:

- Education and business development for creative and industry practitioners
- Greater diversity and representation on all funding panels
- Removal of milestones from the NZ On Air drawdown process
- Increased pressure on commercial platforms to better support local music

However, Māori in the music industry are not only subject to the usual challenges and uncertainties of artistic careers alongside the demands of family life... they contend with the added cultural and political dimensions of being Māori in a colonised nation. They are leaders in te ao Māori, working towards restoration and regeneration... they are also leaders in te ao Pākeha, advocating, educating and fighting for equal partnership. That is a heavy workload.

“There’s a time cost to living as Māori that’s widely unrecognized. Take this week for example. Outside of my normal 40+ working hours and raising my children, I was involved in a review for the Wai262 Framework for Taonga Māori protection, a review to improve funding conditions for Māori Artists, a Marae and hapu hui regarding a Treaty Settlement & Post Settlement Governance Entity review for our iwi, and this one.” Manager

Support to grow capability and infrastructure that a) embodies a Māori worldview in an active treaty partnership with Pākeha and b) can relieve pressure on the limited number of Māori individuals with the capacity to advocate and work in this space, is critical for a free and flourishing creative environment. Creativity, more than anything, needs time – and time is scarce for Māori in our industry.

The visible success and growth that Māori in the industry are now experiencing also comes hand in hand with the danger that people will assume the goal has now been achieved, when there is still so much more work to do. And also that the work will continue to fall to those who have already done so much, but who are not inexhaustible and need to be able to delegate, as well as to empower the generations coming up behind them.



Ria Hall





“How do people understand the place of funding – and their own place – in the context of their individual journey. That information and support is lacking... the part where the person applying understands where they are in the landscape”

Local Industry

“The barrier for waiata Māori in the past was a lack of waiata being made, and the quality wasn't consistent. So we opened the floodgates and got a lot of people from all walks of life writing waiata – which was great. Now we have demand and we have more waiata but there's also a large middle-ground where there's lots of potential but not the business capability. The ability of people to commercialize their music or sustain their careers is very low, irrespective of their talent. So at the end of the day... the problem we started with isn't that different from the one we have now... too small a number of capable people.” Local Industry

Relieving the pressure on people who are already working hard comes down to ensuring that capability is built-up in younger generations, and that their pathways into the industry are clear. Business development is a request being made across the entire industry. Culturally specific – and accessible – business development is requested by Māori.

“Māori artists have a perception that NZ On Air is a pākeha organisation - and that they don't get Māori. Perhaps that's partly true. Is NZ On Air able to find a way to better represent?” Local Industry

Māori in the music industry talk about barriers for rangatahi; specifically their wariness of the predominant Pākeha culture and leadership in our music industry, a lack of access to support in communities outside the urban centres, and a lack of clarity about funding and career pathways.

“There's still distrust in our community – even if things have changed, that distrust can still exist. It's a distrust of authority. Covid exacerbated that. 'We' may have made some ground but there are talented music creators out there who aren't connected to the industry and our progress is not their experience. We need to keep demonstrating how things have changed, and how things work.” Local Industry

“When someone doesn't get funding, how do you explain 'it's not because you're Māori... it's because your music genuinely needs development. And here's what you can do to increase your chances of success.'?” Local Industry

Rei



If there was a dedicated mātanga Māori at NZ On Air (and also – ideally – at the New Zealand Music Commission) working alongside other mātanga Māori throughout the industry, with the support and solidarity of a fully empowered central body (the Māori Music Industry Coalition), this kind of feedback and development could be provided holistically, with tautoko and support coming from a range of individual and iwi perspectives.

Kaupapa-led connections between rangatahi and the music industry could then be built and nurtured, knowledge shared, and pressure relieved from those who are shouldering the majority of the load.

“From a funding perspective, we need to get to a point where we don’t need a songwriting camp to make a Māori song. We need funding that enables our songs to be created as part of a normal process. Especially for Māori who are outside of Auckland – who aren’t connected and don’t know what funding exists and how to access it.” *Producer*

We are now experiencing a time of unprecedented visibility for Māori culture, not only in Aotearoa but also around the world. The partnership between Matewa Media and Disney has seen *The Lion King*, *Encanto*, *Coco*, *Moana* and *Frozen* all interpreted and recorded in te reo Māori. More than 1.8 million kiwis watched *Te Matatini* in 2023 and it has at last received a funding boost in line with its powerful audience engagement and cultural significance. There’s an enormous Māori musical presence on social media platforms. The work of Taika Waititi has promoted Māori and other indigenous voices to audiences around the world... to the point where there are now *Ātua Māori* in blockbuster superhero movies.

This global interest in te ao Māori brings us back to NZ On Air’s remit, and the ability of Māori artists to allocate Waiata Takitahi, and any future partnership funding, towards the promotion of their music beyond New Zealand.

“There’s so much global interest for Māori music on social media – Māori stuff on Tik Tok goes off! Most of my Tik Tok is full of Māori kids turning global trends into Māori stuff and the viewership is at a serious level. We should be looking at ways to really capitalise on that. Māori culture is the one thing that makes us stand out in a global market. It gives us an identity and a sound.”

Producer



Kaaterama Pou





Alien Weaponry

As a crown entity and partner in the Treaty of Waitangi, surely NZ On Air needs to ensure that its remit presents no barrier to Māori artists sending their work into the world? Especially if the demand in the world exceeds the demand at home – and when the demand at home may be limited not only by size, but also by prejudice.

More than 170,000 Māori live in Australia but changes to the way that Spotify algorithms deliver music to our region mean that New Zealand music isn't directed towards the global audiences that can amplify it to the point where it gets directed back to us here in our own region. The 8.38% share that local music has of all NZ streams is testament to that. We're at a further disadvantage because Spotify's Australasian offices (along with the other major digital platforms) are located in Australia. The visibility of New Zealand music there is not only low, but also competing for the platforms' attention with Australian artists in their home environment.

NZ On Air does allow a capped amount of funding to be spend on Australian PR, but that needs to be approved separately.

"Māori music creators know there's support from Te Māngai Pāho and NZ On Air to record songs... but that doesn't necessarily lead to sustainability in a career. Until we put NZ creatives at the forefront of the content that's available in our country, then we'll always be competing with what's overseas for our own audience." Local Industry

We need a greater presence for all New Zealand music on broadcast and online platforms for so many reasons. For waiata Māori, we also have an obligation to consider the Treaty of Waitangi when we examine how funding structures serve to support or inhibit waiata Māori's ability to be made, and to connect with an audience on predominantly pākeha broadcast and online platforms.

"Is there up to date data on how much waiata Māori is being played, and where? What is the market share? Data will help us call out systemic racism and bias, either from the broadcasters or from society. Either way, by describing the problem we can propose a solution."

Local Industry



PASIFIKA

“Our people are so under-represented. It’s like an underground market... we go about doing our thing differently. Heads are down... not looking up, not looking for help or reaching out.”

Artist

The New Music Pasifika fund was launched in 2019 and exists to support the creation of songs by Pasifika artists in Aotearoa. It provides \$10,000 towards the costs of recording a single and/or making video content to support the single’s release, along with promotional activity to enhance the discoverability of the funded song. There are two rounds per year with an average of 70 people applying for 20 grants per round.

Pasifika artists, like all artists, are thankful for NZ On Air’s support to create. The criteria in this stream have been adjusted to create greater access to funding based on the needs and realities of Pasifika creators, and there’s clear and consistent demand for this stream.

“Before NZ On Air’s Pasifika funding initiative there was a general perception that unless you were a Tier 1 artist there was no way you could get funded. Once you start measuring criteria around social media, Spotify etc. it’s going to exclude emerging Pasifika artists. Reflecting that in the criteria has made a real difference and the funding has definitely created opportunities.” Artist

“I’ve got a 9 to 5 job. I’m not a full time artist. That means my metrics aren’t the same as they would be for a full time artist with a team... they reflect a person who’s trying to make a living.” Artist

Despite the gratitude for this funding stream, many Pasifika artists still feel as if they’re on the outside of an industry that isn’t structured with them in mind and doesn’t reflect their values in the broader sense:

- Pasifika worldviews aren’t strategically represented in the music industry (or reflected in this stream)
- There’s a lack of visibility in the wider music industry for Pasifika artists (outside the dedicated Pasifika space – which in turn encompasses several different nations, cultures and languages)
- There are large infrastructure gaps in the Pasifika music space
- There’s a lack of business capability among Pasifika artists - administrative processes are a barrier for many
- There’s an entrenched sense that funding is only accessible to very successful artists, and a reluctance among emerging and establishing artists to self-promote or put themselves forward for it



Lepani





Lou'ana

"People are more likely to ask for help from someone they know. Culture adds another layer to that. Pasifika artists feel better asking for help from Pasifika people. There needs to be visible Pasifika representation and mentorship throughout the industry and its organisations."

Local Industry

"I would probably want to try changing people's mentality towards funding, rather than the funding itself. My thing is... everyone's got an opportunity... if you don't take it, that's on you. Especially if the system is saying 'hey, I'm trying to make it easier for you.' But for a lot of us there's a mentality that stops you from talking to people in the industry. There's a mentality that you don't belong. It's hard to change that. It's the machinery of everything that is the system... everything that we've gone through." Artist

For many Pasifika artists, there's an uneasy sense that having a dedicated fund based on ethnicity is representative of a more general degree of exclusion. This is a sentiment shared by artists in other dedicated funds too – **people would far prefer to be working in an industry where they're fully and fairly represented, than be receiving special dispensation as a marginalised group.**

"You would hope that NZ On Air's services are for all, and are inclusive. By having this specific round we're indicating that, potentially, they're not. This support is something we need for now, but hopefully it's not needed in the future. We know the industry is trying to be more inclusive and balanced, and that's good movement to see happen. But some people feel that they're in the 'other' as a result. It's a fine line between inclusion and othering." Local Industry

There's concern that the overarching industry only has time and space for one form of advocacy or affirmative action at a time, whether that's gender equality, ethnic representation or something else – and that the industry's attention moves from one thing to the next, depending on the loudest voices and the strongest advocates, without a greater sense of continuity and fairness across the whole. Pasifika people in the industry believe themselves to be at the back of the line in terms of the priority they receive as a community of creators and business people. This funding stream is valuable and important to them, but there are wider systemic issues of access and representation that need to be addressed too. There is opportunity, now, to create Pasifika led collaboration – similar to NZ On Air's partnership with Te Māngai Pāho – where the strategic goals of Pacific peoples can be integrated into the funding that's specifically targeted to them, and augment the resources available to help them grow their music careers.



“Embedding Pacific values into the way funding is delivered... really understanding the way that Pacific artists think, what they do and how they approach things... is so important. Currently the framework on which the funding is based is NZ On Air’s own mandate and policy which also assumes that Pacific artists are moving into a mainstream space. Actually, we have niche audiences within our own communities here and overseas too. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples has developed a Pacific Wellbeing Strategy and that should be informing the way that any Pacific specific funding is delivered. The metrics and mechanisms of funding need to reflect Pacific artists’ perspectives. A co-fund with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples – which could make the pot bigger as well as ensuring that the Pasifika worldview is woven into its objectives – could make funding more effective and frequent.” Artist

Pasifika artists echo everyone else in the music industry when they talk about a lack of meaningful broadcast opportunities for their work – but they also wrestle with the added dimension of being placed into a genre based on ethnicity, rather than music.

“From a Pacific perspective there are minimal options when it comes to radio. Significant airplay is huge for streaming numbers but the opportunity on radio is so small. MaiFM is the only real commercial station and it’s hard enough to get on there because you’re competing with all of the international artists. We have about three amazing bands that take up that whole chunk. There’s not a lot of room for anyone else.” Artist

A lack of Pasifika industry infrastructure also means that there’s an important pathway missing when it comes to the delivery of information and resources. Pasifika artists and industry professionals say that access to education and legal advice is critical to ensuring that they’re safe to create in an industry that can be confusing and overwhelming – and where power can be easily abused because of deeply embedded cultural and religious attitudes towards people in positions of authority.

“There aren’t enough managers in the Pacific space... not enough visible support. We need Pacific industry. We also need our artists to become more independent and aware of the business side of things. We need to develop the messengers and focus on how our leaders can enable emerging talent.” Artist

Empowering Pasifika people to deliver education and support to Pasifika artists in the ways they need to receive it, and making space for more Pasifika representation in the industry, so that Pacific values form part of its fabric and inform its pathways – is key to a flourishing creative space.



Olivia Foa'i





Vallé

"What that first wave of really successful Pacific hip-hop did was create a sense of potential for all of us. But it also showed up the fragility of Pacific understanding of enterprise. We couldn't look after our own money. We didn't understand the music business and its mechanisms."

Creative Industry

"I've seen a lot of artists get funding but their careers don't take off. They get the money but they don't get the information. They don't know how to play the game. All the funding in the world... if you don't know what you're doing, it doesn't make a difference. The thing you can do is educate. All the info's there, but maybe people don't catch it, or it's not given to them the way they need to understand it." Artist

Pasifika artists have a three-fold request for business development attached to funding:

- Take into account the different ways in which Pasifika people deal with administration and handle budgets in both the application and reporting phases of funding. Remove the drawdowns. And also consider other ways in which applications can be presented – with a focus on creation and intent rather than budget and audience outcomes.
- Offer business development alongside grants so that Pasifika artists have support with managing resources and working within industry frameworks
- Help to build Pasifika industry infrastructure so that Pasifika artists can seek assistance and guidance from other Pasifika people

"Where are the Pasifika publicists? It's one thing to ask for publicity to be part of a budget, but where are the people who can fulfil those roles, with an understanding of the communities they're serving?" Local Industry

"Reciprocity is a strong Pacific value which connects into role modelling, mentoring and pastoral care. What might be of value to emerging Pasifika artists is not just money to create, but connection to other successful Pasifika people who can offer support and guidance." Artist

"In the Pacific spectrum, what's solid in terms of an economic asset is our creativity, our music and our design. We need co-investment to build a way forwards. Not just another festival... a whole strategy to generate Pacific talent and creativity. An investment in the whole eco-system. If you want to win, you have to go for the whole." Creative Industry



PAN-ASIAN

“There hasn't been space for Asian artists in the NZ pop music industry. People ask me 'where have you been?' I've been here all along. But I think race-based preconceptions about the quality of my music have made it harder for me to break through.”

Artist

The Pan-Asian Fund is a new, targeted fund to support the Pan-Asian music community in Aotearoa. It was created due to the lack of equitable representation for Pan-Asian artists in the music sector, and designed to increase the amount of quality Pan-Asian music content available here, as well as to support artists to connect with Pan-Asian and mainstream audiences.

[Note: NZ On Air has used the term Pan-Asian as defined by the UN, which covers all of Asia as well as the Middle East.]

At the time of writing, the first recipients of the inaugural Pan-Asian fund have only just been announced, so there are no outcomes to comment on yet.

However, it's testament to the demand for this funding stream that 107 artists applied for 15 grants – the largest relative uptake across all of NZ On Air's funding streams. Applications were received from artists identifying as Chinese, Indian, Filipino, South Korean, Japanese, Indonesian, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Thai and Iraqi. Six of the 15 songs that secured funding are bilingual, featuring Asian languages such as Cantonese, Korean, Japanese, Malay and Punjabi. The musical genres varied from alternative/indie and pop to hip-hop/RnB, dance/electro and folk/country.^[23]

16% of Aotearoa's population is Asian according to the 2018 census. The recently collected 2023 census data hasn't been collated yet, but this population share is forecast to increase to 26% by 2040 – Kiwi-Asians are our fastest growing ethnic group^[24].

With the initiation of the Pan-Asian fund, NZ On Air recognised the need to represent the growing number of talented Kiwi-Asian creators here, ensuring that the music NZ On Air funds more accurately reflects our shifting demographics and evolving multi-culture.



Crystal Chen





HANS

“One thing I thought was done really well with the Pan Asian fund was the translation of the info into multiple languages. That was impressive. That’s really putting your money where your mouth is. Acknowledging that Chinese, Filipino, Korean (...) communities are all large and distinct communities with Aotearoa... it’s important.”

Manager

Even without knowing what will result from the funded projects, there is one element of the fund – relating to NZ On Air’s remit – that people believe can be improved.

Not being able to allocate the budget to international promotion and publicity is uniquely limiting for artists from immigrant backgrounds because it prevents them from marketing to their countries and communities of origin. A number of Kiwi-Asian artists who have recently moved here, have markets in the places where they or their parents were born – and those markets can be profoundly bigger than anything here in Aotearoa. If artists don’t have independent funds with which to promote themselves internationally, they’re prevented from marketing to their own people.

“I’m Kiwi with a Korean background and I really want to build a career in Asia. Being able to use some funding for Korean PR would help me grow my audience in Korea, which would in turn drive my New Zealand audience via the Korean community here.” Artist

“In the age of streaming, we should never just think about New Zealand. There are Asian artists here who might never have an NZ audience – but they will have one in China or Korea. I know a Chinese rapper who lives here and regularly gets radio play in Guangzhou. There are more people in Guangzhou than there are people AND sheep in New Zealand.” Local Industry

We also need to consider the economic potential of the international audience that connects to our Kiwi-Asian artists. Currently our industry focuses on the traditional nexus points of the popular music industry – the US and the UK. But if we remain so narrow in our focus in the midst of a rapidly changing geo-political landscape, we’re missing an enormous opportunity to grow our industry organically and increase its sustainability. There was no music industry representation in the Prime Minister’s recent trade delegation to China, but China is the 5th biggest music market in the world, with over 700 million digital music users.



"I think we're still very reticent about Asia. Why do we keep sending our artists to LA or London? Logically we should be looking at other export markets because geographically we're in an interesting position. Even though we're in the 'wrong' hemisphere we're also part of a very big conglomeration of Asia Pacific countries and markets. Indonesia is an island nation with 270 million people on it. It's actually nuts that we're not exporting there. We're expending so much effort trying to get people in Masterton to listen to NZ music. Imagine if we invested in the Indonesian market." Manager

Here at home, Kiwi-Asian artists also talk about a lack of visibility and access to the industry. The music community is warm, but the industry is aloof.

"Some people might be upset to see a Pan-Asian fund because they don't think there are that many Asian artists here. But that's only because there hasn't been support for us. A whole lot of us will show up if we feel included. And while the funding is great, I'm more interested in industry balance than I am in compensating for a lack of balance." Artist

"The hardest thing for me entering the industry was not having networks. It's hard to introduce yourself into industry circles, especially if you don't look like everyone else. Everyone is friends with each other and you don't feel comfortable at the events. It would be cool to do more to usher in artists who don't have connections, and build the representation. The Pan-Asian fund is a good step in the right direction. I don't really like the idea of handing someone money just for being Asian... but opening up the field and inviting people in? Not treating people differently? Maybe NZ On Air can help in that way." Artist

The earlier points made in this review about relinquishing our beliefs about niche and mainstream audiences, and instead embracing the many different audience communities in the world, are relevant to our Kiwi-Asian artists seeking to overcome discrimination and industry preconceptions about where they fit into the local environment too.

Access to global communities will allow Kiwi-Asian artists to not only transcend the limitations they experience in our immediate environment, but powerfully connect them to other parts of the world.

[Post-script: NZ On Air has just announced that the Pan-Asian fund will be offered again next year.]



Hanbee



NEW MUSIC KIDS



Claudia Robin Gunn

“You don’t have to fit in a box when you’re writing for kids. You can write a song about having two mums, you can write a song about bullies, you can write a song about being proud like a rainbow unicorn, you can write a song about any emotion under the sun. We’re trying to empower the next generation of kids to be completely themselves.”

Artist

The New Music Kids fund assists with the creation of children’s music content – audio recordings and music videos. There are two rounds per year with an average of 30 people applying for 12 grants per round.

Children’s songwriters occupy a unique and beautiful place on the musical continuum.

The benefits of music to children’s learning and development are undeniable. Extensive research from around the world shows that music accelerates brain development; supports language acquisition and reading skills; develops motor skills, coordination, empathy and collaboration; and stimulates mathematical learning.^[25]

Perplexingly, despite all of these proven benefits, music has gradually been eroded from Aotearoa’s primary school curricula (except for in the kura kaupapa space, where music is fundamentally woven into the delivery of education) as a greater focus on reading, writing and numeracy and STEM subjects has been prioritised at the expense of the arts (the very things that give those subjects context and meaning and make them easier to learn).

As access to specialist music education is denied to most children in our mainstream education system (and particularly to children whose families can’t afford to provide this education independently) the role of our children’s writers becomes increasingly important because their work can still be accessed. More than most other ‘genres’ in Aotearoa, the language of our children’s writers is inherently local and their work revolves around identity creation at a crucial point in the development of our future generations.

Children’s writers say that NZ On Air funding has helped them to elevate the quality of their work by encouraging them to emerge from a DIY space, and establish relationships with other creatives and industry professionals. They are incredibly grateful for funding support.



“What makes a good children’s song? It’s not just about what children like... because the pop songs they might like on the radio don’t reflect their lives or their emotional states at all. Those songs aren’t written for them. A good children’s song is something else... something that entertains a child... something that communicates a child’s world... something that reflects a child’s worldview”

Artist

Since the last review, NZ On Air has reassessed the criteria for New Music Kids funding and adjusted it to reflect the different realities of the children’s music community – a space where the rules of popular music don’t apply. Children’s writers are happy with those changes.

While social media might now be the primary vehicle for audience engagement in the popular music sphere, it’s an environment that’s unsafe for children and most children’s writers consider it to be unethical to direct children towards it. Those who do engage on social media promote to parents – unless there are dedicated safe spaces. Long form music videos might be less relevant for popular writers, but they remain an important way for children’s writers to bring musical stories to life. Parents can also rely on children’s videos – and especially children’s series – as a safe source of entertainment for their kids.

One thing that’s the same in both spaces, however, is the lack of terrestrial broadcast opportunity.

“It’s hard to get TV to notice NZ children’s content – there’s no direct way to submit music videos to TVNZ. Having a funnel for that would be amazing. You’d think there would be some way to submit work to the national broadcaster.” Artist

The Kids Music Collective - a collaborative group for producers or performers of music for tamariki – has about 150 members. This modest number of writers enjoys a huge degree of success here and around the world. Craig Smith’s ‘The Wonky Donkey’ has sold more than 4 million copies and for three weeks it was the best selling book of any genre in the world. Claudia Robin Gunn has more than 110,000 monthly listeners on Spotify – more than seven times the monthly listeners of the Children’s Grammy award winners over the past four years combined... and on a par with Nadia Reid, Troy Kingi and many other acclaimed NZ artists in the popular space.



Levity Beet





Loopy Tunes

These (and other) examples tell us that Children's music is yet another area where NZ writers punch above their weight in the world. Could it be that our notions of mainstream, niche, commercial and pop are blinding us to the enormous value and potential of these writers and performers, or does the children's music sector simply suffer, as the rest of us do, from a systemic disregard for the power of music and the arts, full stop?

"As a children's performer and teacher I visit about 150 schools a year. I think maybe three of those have a specialist music teacher." Artist

"Currently, school teachers get six hours of training across their three years of study to deliver the arts. Not just music, but all the arts. Very few primary schools invest in a specialist teacher – those are few and far between. Musical learning media is not created by the Ministry, so it has to be created by music teachers. With Covid, there's been a real loss of instrumental and vocal learning..." Secondary School Music Educator

"Where you come from, and your family background, really determines whether you can aspire to music as a career. There are talented people who don't make it through the education system. If their school doesn't have a specialist teacher they don't get resourced or taught. If they don't come from a family who prioritises music... or a family who can afford to send them to music lessons and buy them instruments or equipment... they just don't have access. We're missing those people." Tertiary School Music Educator

It's hard to imagine what the future is for our music creators, our music industry, or the musical literacy of our audience if music is not accessible at this most important and impressionable point in the lives of our people.

"Our music industry will get to the point where music isn't a sustainable career at all. And it will only take another decade. We're on the floorboards now, and if there's nothing under those... if the rot has set in... they'll give way beneath us. I heard that the National Youth Orchestra has shortage of bass players because kids aren't diversifying beyond the popular instruments. There aren't enough kids learning instruments to populate our future orchestras. The education isn't available." Primary School Music Educator

We are in territory well beyond the scope of NZ On Air now, but looking to the Tertiary sector and observing the dissolution of schools such as MAINZ, and the uncertainty facing so many other tertiary departments around the country, it seems frighteningly clear that there is a problem at the source and advocacy from everyone, including NZ On Air, is critical to prevent further erosion of our industry at its roots. **If we don't value and invest in music at the very beginning of the career pathway onwards, our future capacity will disappear.**



UNITY

“The whole music industry needs to be on the same page. Imagine a future that's bigger than the individual bodies who build it. A wholesale shift in thinking.”

Global Industry

“It feels at times as if our music economy is little more than a competition for funding. There isn't a big picture strategy driving our sector forward. I think there are complex systemic issues that inhibit our forward momentum.”

Local Industry

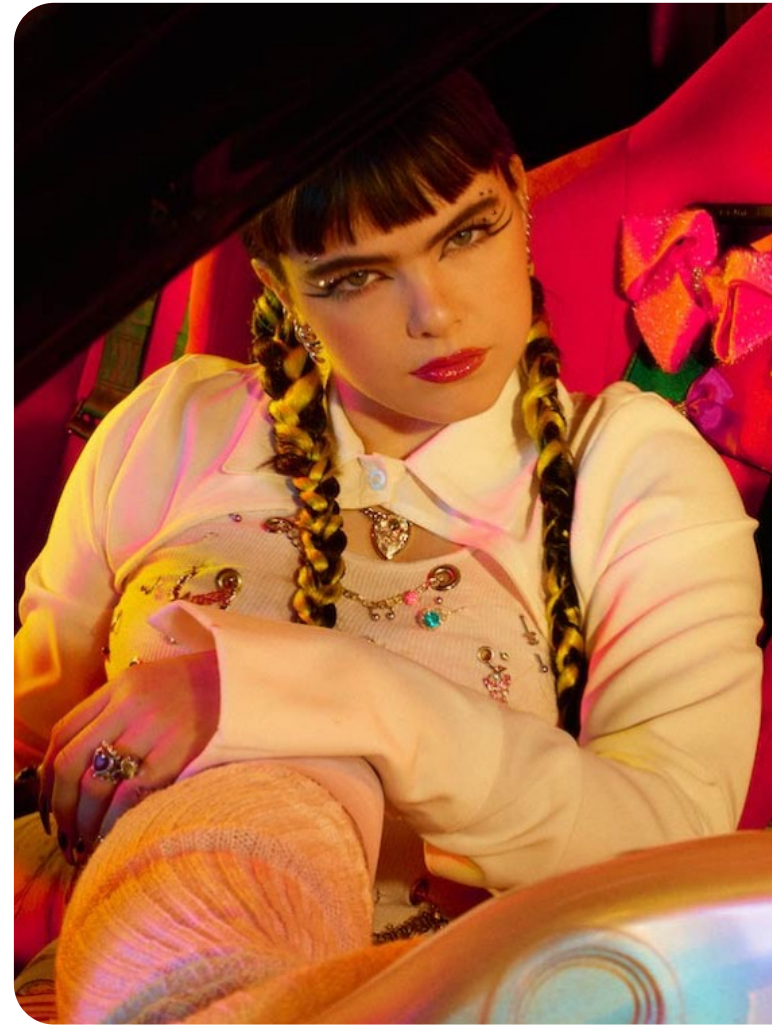
What people want most of all is something beyond NZ On Air's remit and ability to provide. They want a central vision to underpin the activities of **all** of our industry organisations. They want industry unity and a strong, clear export strategy.

“Music is an industry with an ecosystem. You need to understand the parts, and the correlation between them. If you don't support the ecosystem as a whole, then you're just providing welfare – small handouts with no greater purpose. There needs to be a whole of government investment in the music ecosystem – and that includes the ways in which music interacts with health, trade, education, innovation, small business, export... there isn't a single government portfolio that is irrelevant to, or that doesn't benefit from, music.” Local Industry

Artists want to know how everything connects and works together. They want a map of the world, and to know where they are in it. Everyone needs to undertake their own career journey but it helps to have a starting point, a destination, a sense of what to expect along the way, and a tool for navigation.

“There needs to be greater holistic support around artists. All the elements – writing, recording, touring, streaming, marketing, export. At the moment many of those elements are administered through different agencies. I don't think people know how to navigate it all.” Local Industry

“Even as we're having this conversation I'm thinking that anything I, or anyone else, has to say will be obsolete this time next year. Strategy is the missing link. We need experts overseeing the way we structure all of our funding. Trusted sources of information. People who know the shape of the market, so that we can get a sense of how to move forwards and what might be coming... before it hits us.” Artist



Benee





The Beths

"It feels like there are a lot of different places to go to for such a small market. Is there a better way to coordinate all of that activity? Can we all get together and see what's working and what's missing? Can we make something really sustainable, directed and centralized?"

Local Industry

STRATEGY

Can the industry bodies work together to create a unified strategy? Can they collaborate to map out where they all intersect with artists' career pathways – examine their shared priorities, align their approaches, and actively and persistently advocate for the needs of the industry for their mutual benefit?

"Throw it open. Put all of the funding options on the table, across all of the providers, and sit down together to identify where there are double ups that can be streamlined – and where there's potential for collaboration to better serve the community." Independent Label

FUNDING

Can industry bodies work together to align their funding rounds – so that artists' business plans can be consistent across the range of opportunities. Can application and reporting systems be coordinated and simplified as a result, with criteria that helps to direct applications towards specific support?

"I have to write two business plans when I apply for funding (NZ On Air for recording and the Music Commission for touring) but the outcomes I want are the same. Can't those funding bodies synchronize around a project? Can't they work out what to unite on? If they did that... so that you knew if you had support, and how much... then you could make a plan and build the bigger picture." Manager

EDUCATION

Can industry bodies coordinate to offer educational resources and professional development initiatives, forming a single point of truth and offering knowledge as a condition of funding so that artists receiving financial support are also developing sustainable businesses?

"How good would it be for an independent or emerging artist to receive funding and also have the option of a 101 session with someone who can get them thinking differently... 'This is how to build a strategy... this is how artists are breaking... this is what's happening with music consumption...'" Major Label



“Soundcheck Aotearoa is fighting to resource its upcoming year... it’s forced to ask the question ‘can we afford to prevent Sexual Harassment next year?’ How is that an ok way for the music industry to function?”

Local Industry

SAFETY

Can industry bodies unify around safety? Can they collectively advocate for secure and sustained funding for Soundcheck Aotearoa? Workplace safety isn’t an aspirational ideal or a nice-to-have. It’s a human right enshrined by legislation in Aotearoa.

The Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code ^[26] – an internationally recognised code of labour practice founded on the conventions of the International Labour Organisation – consists of nine provisions. The music industry fails to meet seven of them:

- Employment is freely chosen
- Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected
- Working conditions are safe and hygienic / *think of some of the environments musicians work in*
- Child labour shall not be used / *many artists and bands working in our industry are under 18*
- Living wages are paid / *see the 2022 Profile of NZ Creative Professionals ^[4]*
- Working hours are not excessive / *Musicians’ hours are often long and anti-social*
- No discrimination is practiced / *see the 2020 Amplify Aotearoa study ^[15]*
- Regular employment is provided / *see the 2022 Profile of NZ Creative Professionals ^[6]*
- No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed / *read Stuff’s #metoo reporting ^[27]*

Called to action by Massey University’s Amplify Aotearoa study in 2020 (Massey is another tertiary institution currently under threat of course and staffing cuts)^[28] and further inspired by events revealed in the press relating to abuses of power and sexual harm in our music industry, Soundcheck Aotearoa was formed with a mission to foster a safe and inclusive culture for the music community. To date they’ve advocated tirelessly, raised awareness, led research, provided Professional Respect Training to hundreds of music industry professionals, made a wide range of resources available, employed a Project Manager and appointed a Sexual Harm Prevention & Response Advisor for the music industry. The fact they don’t yet have ongoing financial certainty seems discriminatory in itself.



FAFSWAG





Nadia Reid

"If you look at the charts, men still dominate them. Additional support for wahine is very important – especially if they're having families. Artists who tour struggle to get women on the billing... wahine who are so super talented but just not supported."

Local Industry

GENDER EQUALITY

Can the music industry work together to agree upon percentages for gender representation across all of its organisations? Can it organise to collectively advocate for better gender representation from commercial broadcasters and festivals? Can it create initiatives to achieve balance in areas where it's still lacking along the career pathway?

"Female+ acts are largely invisible because they're not on the radio or in festivals. Until we can break through that wall and get gatekeepers to make some meaningful change – this will stay the same." *Publicist*

"I think we need to take stock of the systemic issue and try to address it, both individually and collectively. Until an individual realises the part they play in a systemic issue we can't move forward... but one person can't be responsible for cultural change. Fewer women are being played on radio and in festivals because they aren't seen... they're invisible. Most people are still of the mindset that it's about quality, but it's not. It's about visibility." *Manager*

"Gender inequality is a big picture thing – a strategic overarching plan for the development and long term success of women is key – a view on fairness and safety that can be part of the plan from the first song, to the second album, to the international tour. Being able to provide meaningful support for the whole trajectory... not just isolated events." *Manager*

"Can there be some support for mothers who tour? Otherwise so many of us are going to stop. Shouldn't we be able to include airfares and a fee for someone to care for our children when we tour? Especially if we're depending on the other income-earner in our family to stay home and work, because we can't afford to lose that income stream? The industry is not friendly for mothers. If you stop touring for too long you lose confidence, and perhaps even your audience, through the inactivity." *Artist*



“Lose the fluffy stuff. Stop using all the nice language without the accountability. Manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, kotahitanga... they’re beautiful words, and they mean something.”

Artist

PARTNERSHIP

Can NZ On Air (and the New Zealand Music Commission) appoint mātanga Māori so that the interests of tangata whenua can be recognised within those organisations, and connect to others throughout the industry? Can the industry work with the Māori Music Industry Coalition to feed into strong, centralized infrastructure support for Māori?

“One single agency can’t be responsible for a full and comprehensive strategy to promote our creations. Everyone has their core business and we’re all operating in a changing landscape. As a collective, a cross sector wānanga would be a good idea. What’s going to get the best result and outcome for our investment? We’re all trying to figure out the best result and the biggest audience and we can only really do that if we work together.” Local Industry

DIVERSITY

Can the industry work together to ensure greater diversity across its organisations? Can music industry bodies collaborate with other cultural organisations to ensure that the delivery of information, guidance and targeted funding is better aligned to the communication styles, needs, and values of the communities they’re working with?

SCREEN

Can NZ On Air collaborate within its own organisation to build intersections between screen and music – so that music can have clearer pathways towards broadcast outcomes?

“I’m a strong advocate for the TV side talking to the music side. There needs to be some screen funding available to put towards the inclusion of local music in funded productions, and a way to incentivize the hiring of NZ composers. I see screen production budgets going up and up, but not music budgets. It doesn’t make sense that the two sides of NZ On Air aren’t working together for the mutual benefit of the people it funds.” Manager



Arahi





Avantdale Bowling Club

"When it comes to funding in educational institutions, music and the arts are always the first thing to go, which is so ironic in the wake of Covid given that music and the arts were where everyone turned for solace. You'd think that the level of engagement people had with music during the global pandemic would be a flashing light to say... 'we need this!'

Tertiary Educator

EDUCATION

Can we rally our entire sector to convince the Ministry of Education and the government of the importance of music education – from Primary school through to Tertiary level – before the damage to our sector and our culture is irreparable?

"The singular focus on the big three subjects has eroded music completely. Reading, writing, maths. There are nine subjects we need to teach at Primary level and, while they're all supposed to be equal, the big three are more equal than the others. The arts will only ever receive one hour a week, max, for dance, visual arts, drama *and* music. How can we do it?" Primary Educator

"Kids need to start music early but I have students walking into Year 9 who have never had a music lesson. They can't play an instrument at Level 2 of the senior curriculum, yet they're still expecting to get to Level 3. Parents aren't confident that music is a viable career. I have a really talented student who won't pursue music because her family is so cynical. Even my most passionate students struggle to last." Secondary Educator

"I've seen a pivot towards market forces in arts education. It's not peculiar to music but it's definitely hurting music. Despite funding cuts every year, university music departments are expected to function more and more like businesses and that's not a brilliant model for incubating new talent. When people are getting started creatively and building their confidence, you need to protect them and give them a safe space where they can take risks. Market forces don't encourage risk taking. If you've only got one shot, you don't want to fail. There's a lot more pressure, and a lot more risk aversion among students. They're paying fees... they want to pass... they're worried about what's going to happen when they graduate. When the stakes are high, it seems better not to take a risk than to get it wrong. And that's not very rock and roll." Tertiary Educator



EXPORT

“New Zealand artists need clear pathways to the global market.”

We've been saying this for quite a while. This quote is from Malcolm Black in 'Creating Heat / Tumata Kia Whita! – A Strategy to Ignite the Economic and Cultural Potential of the NZ Music Industry' – written in 2004

Which brings us back to export.

The size of our population is disproportionately smaller than the number of our talented creators. A domestic career is almost impossible here. We make wonderful music. Our place and our voices are unique. But if we are limited by the very bodies who are investing in us, with no vision but to subsist in a marketplace of just 5 million people and no empowerment to reach beyond it – our creators will struggle to sustain themselves, and therefore to create, and our culture will be infinitely poorer.

Is it possible for NZ On Air to reconsider its own remit – to take into account our global landscape, and the ways in which the algorithmic gatekeepers of our vast internet platforms limit the delivery of our own music to us, in our own place?

Can our industry unify to build clear pathways for our music and musicians into the world? Can our artists and our infrastructure be meaningfully supported to access our fullest possible market?

And can we collectively convince the Government to put us firmly on their agenda and back our music's enormous export potential?

“We live in an incredibly globalised world now. When I was younger, there were advantages to being local. Local press, Music TV, Bnet*. Nearly all of that is gone now. Instead of local media we have global platforms, websites and blogs, all competing for views and clicks. Bigger and better careers are possible with a global focus. The NZ artists who export will have longer and more sustainable careers, and fly the flag for all of us.” Manager

“What are the things you need to do to become a net exporter of music? You need music made in schools. Pathways from school to industry. Career development for emerging artists. Career sustainability for established artists and pathways towards export. And you need to be able to see the line through the industry... where does each person fit, and can they see where that is?” Local Industry

*Auckland's student radio station - bFM – is currently at risk of closing, selling a large portion of its Vinyl collection and staging a fundraising concert in an effort to stay afloat^[29]



Kimbra



CONCLUSION



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. ENABLE EXPORT**
Reframe NZ On Air's remit to facilitate the export of NZ music, so that artists can better access their audiences and sustain their careers
- 2. TIER FUNDING**
Adjust New Music funding streams to allow for greater agility, elasticity and fairness for applicants and recipients
- 3. DEFINE SUCCESS**
Set clear measures of success for artists, and fund according to their ability to achieve that success in their chosen spaces
- 4. DEVELOP CAPABILITY**
Offer culturally specific business development to artists to help them increase their industry knowledge, networks and confidence
- 5. INCREASE FLEXIBILITY**
Reduce any unnecessary administrative loads or restrictions on artists that further compromise their ability to create, or engage their audiences
- 6. SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE**
Empower industry infrastructure to better support and promote artists and their music in the transforming environment
- 7. PRIORITISE EQUITY**
Embed safety requirements, representation and cultural worldviews into funding streams
- 8. UNITE INDUSTRY**
Collaborate across industry to achieve the above, and facilitate clear pathways for music from its creation to its audience



TIER FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS



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