



# Arts, Culture & Creativity Strategy

2024-2034

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## Pūpū Harakeke

The pūpū harakeke, an endangered tāonga species, holds significant cultural importance in Māori tradition.



Its shell, also called the harakeke flower shell, is a delicate and intricate structure, often small and spiral shaped. Its form is characterized by concentric circles that gradually expand outward, symbolizing growth, continuity, and the interconnectedness of all living things.

Artists often incorporate it into traditional crafts, celebrating Māori heritage and cultural pride. Just as the shell signifies renewal and growth, the Arts, Culture, and Creativity Strategy reflects adaptation.

The strategy shell design features six koru shapes (five internally and one being the shell itself), which represents the strategy's six pathways.

## **Whakataukī**

**Te toi whakairo, ka ihiihi,  
ka wehiwehi, ka aweawe  
te ao katoa.**

**Artistic excellence  
makes the world sit up  
and wonder.**

# Nā te mea (koromahia)

## Foreword by the Mayor

Every great city and region has a great arts, culture and creativity strategy.

Marlborough has the ingredients to be a highly successful creative region – talented artists and creative people, wonderful community facilities and stunning landscapes, arts education for our young people, and visitors who want to experience the special things we have to offer.

This new strategy brings together all those strands into a short, medium and long term plan for the arts, culture and creativity, right here in Marlborough.

My deepest thanks to the many people who contributed to the development of this strategy, who are far too numerous to mention by name. There have been many meetings and discussions which have generated some exciting ideas and plans – which you will now find embedded in this strategy. I want to underscore that this was not a ‘top-down’ council planning exercise – it’s a grassroots inspired strategy generated by the energy and drive that exists within our creative community.

My special thanks to the Arts Steering Group and Iwi Advisory Panel for their leadership in bringing this together into one strategy and implementation plan.

By working together, we are stronger collectively. I believe that once implemented this strategy will foster more cultural development in Marlborough, better support our artists and creatives, attract more visitors, stimulate the economy and enhance our quality of life, by supporting more creativity and engagement in the arts.

Successful implementation will inspire more innovation, provide more platforms for diverse voices, and consolidate Marlborough’s unique identity.

I encourage you to read and digest the contents of this strategy – it sets a clear, positive path forward for Marlborough’s dynamic creative sector.



Nadine Taylor  
Mayor of Marlborough



# Ā Mātou Kōrero

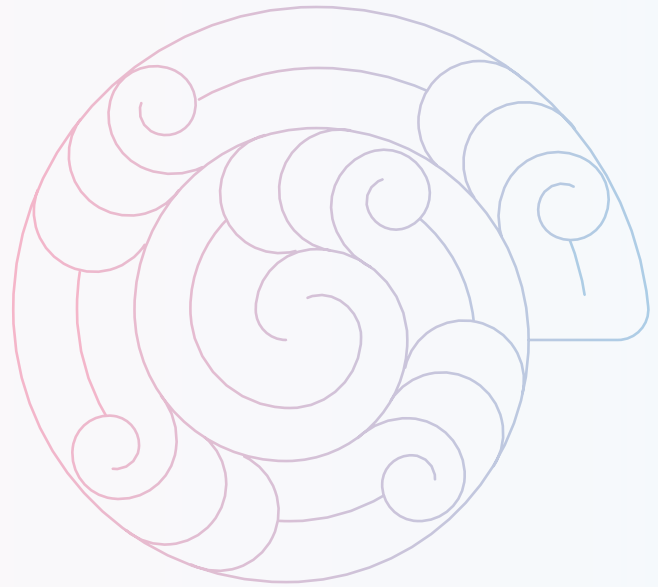
## Our story

Art plays a pivotal role in shaping the identity, cohesion, and vitality of communities. It fosters a sense of belonging, expression, and collective understanding. Its importance goes beyond aesthetics; it serves as a catalyst for social change, education, and emotional well-being within communities. Supporting and promoting art within communities is an essential investment in the enrichment and cohesion of society as a whole.

Our region has a long and deep history of artistic endeavour, extending back beyond the establishment of the province in 1859. Te Pokohiwi o Kupe holds immense significance as a wāhi tapu and an archaeological site.

Excavations at the Wairau Bar uncovered taonga, including tools and jewellery offering tangible connections to the ancestral heritage and daily activities of the Aotearoa's first people. They provide crucial insights into Māori craftsmanship, social structures, and trade networks, unraveling the complexities of their migration, settlement, and cultural practices.

Drawing inspiration from its stunning landscapes and cultural heritage our region has fostered a creative environment that has birthed and nurtured numerous artists.



Showcasing a rich array of creativity spanning various mediums and cultures, our artistic community continues to shape the region's artistic legacy while adding their distinct perspectives to the wider New Zealand art landscape.

Art has the power to stimulate economic growth within communities. Cultural events, galleries, theatres, and art-related initiatives attract tourists, businesses, and investments, contributing to the local economy. It enhances education by nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among individuals, particularly in young minds. Exposure to diverse art forms encourages open-mindedness and innovation, contributing to a well-rounded education.

# Why arts, culture and creativity matter in Te Taihū o te Waka

Marlborough boasts essential elements for a vibrant cultural environment, drawing visitors year-round with its renowned natural beauty and top-tier cultural facilities.

The shifting needs of Marlborough's diverse communities, emerging technological prospects, and a deepening understanding of the responsibilities as a Tiriti partner converge to create an opportune moment for a fresh creative strategy. At the same time, more people recognize the powerful role of the arts in connecting whānau and communities.

Providing a robust framework to support the work of creative individuals is crucial. A thriving arts and cultural sector contribute to an exciting and captivating region, with strategic actions vital to its sustainability and vibrancy in the broader Marlborough region.

Leadership within this sector doesn't solely emanate from the Council but emerges from diverse innovative individuals, organisations, and enterprises. Our population is a tapestry of diversity and talent, housing a community of passionate creators, practitioners, participants, organisations, and audiences.

Urban scenery is evolving due to shifting functions within central business districts, enhancements to the region's infrastructure, threats from climate change, and the increased housing demand. Arts, culture, and creativity are positioned to play a transformative role in shaping our developing urban landscape.

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified challenges of social inequality, mental health, and economic fragility. Arts and culture played a vital role in addressing these issues and the pandemic sparked a surge in creativity, with a global interest in culture evident in online events. Post-pandemic, engagement with the arts has persisted, signalling a change in how we approach and enjoy artistic expressions.

The lessons drawn from the pandemic and climate change prompt us to contemplate how we lead our lives, and how we channel our creativity. Community enthusiasm shown in creating this strategy can unite creatives, national organisations, economic drivers and institutions to drive real cultural change.







Carved pou of Kupe, Ships Cove, Marlborough



## Te Tiriti o Waitangi

While formulating this strategy, we worked to ensure it was consistent with the principles of Te Tiriti of Waitangi.

The Council, along with the broader community, is steadily enhancing its knowledge, comprehension, and application of partnership. This strategy aims to foster the ongoing development of the creative sector and integrate our efforts into a crucial bicultural foundation.

We are committed to adopting a Te Ao Māori approach across all our actions and actively engage Māori in this process.

# Uara Values

In crafting this strategy, we laid down a set of core values to steer our path, ensuring that the initiative encapsulates the essence of what is significant to Marlborough and how we will collaboratively strive to achieve our goals.

## Kaitiakitanga Guardianship

Tending to our artistic endeavours: We responsibly oversee and enhance access to our arts, recognising that we safeguard them on behalf of all of Marlborough.

## Mātauranga Knowledge

We actively seek and share knowledge, value traditional and innovative skills, and encourage questioning and debate within both the creative and broader communities.

## Ōhanga Economy

We recognise that arts and creativity are foundational to innovation and economic growth. Their presence revitalises urban spaces, injecting dynamism into the urban landscape for residents and enhances its attractions for visitors. Creative regions attract innovative talents, businesses, and industries.

## Oranga tonutanga Wellbeing

We recognise the powerful role of arts and creativity in enhancing wellbeing for individuals, communities, and society. Actively integrating them into Marlborough's community and economic foundations, the arts serve as pillars offering joy, entertainment, solace in adversity, and fostering cultural connections and learning opportunities.

## Mana motuhake Identity

Through artistic expression, we communicate our narratives, intricately weaving together elements of arts, culture and heritage. By serving as a canvas for our values and reflecting our rich diversity, the arts become a defining characteristic of our region.

## Manaakitanga Community

Nurturing our communities: we embrace, motivate, engage with, and partner alongside our communities, advocating for the significance of arts, culture and creativity.



# The Creative Economy

This strategy aims to strengthen our creative sector, boosting economic progress and enhancing Marlborough's competitiveness at a national level, attracting investment, talent, and tourism.

The creative sector is an important part of our economy, providing jobs and attracting visitors.

However, we lag behind in creative employment compared to the rest of the country and creative practitioners here tell us they often feel undervalued. If we value art, we must value the people who produce that art and recognise their work as essential, not discretionary. Recognising the importance of art requires valuing the people behind it.

Post-Covid-19, our retail, accommodation and hospitality sectors face challenges. The arts can help revitalize our region, attracting visitors and boosting recovery by increasing footfall and spending.

Nationally, we are increasingly recognizing the arts' benefits for individual wellbeing, communities, and the economy.

Creativity and innovation are closely intertwined in today's context. Creativity sparks inspiration and belief in possibilities, while innovation translates ideas into tangible outcomes. This dynamic can inform local government decisions, evaluate potentials, fosters business collaborations, and inspire distinctive forms of local expression.

**A thriving artistic culture relies on a complete ecosystem, including spaces for presenting work, collaborators for creation, access to materials and technology for craftsmanship, and engaged audiences. Often, these elements operate on volunteer efforts and goodwill, but this is not sustainable.**







Nationally, \$14.9 billion GDP was generated by the arts and creative sector to March 2022. In Marlborough the sector contributed a GDP of \$78.6 million, a 12-month increase of 0.5% compared to 10.6% nationally.

New statistics released by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH) have found that the Government investment in arts delivers strong economic results, with employment, business and GDP growing in 2022.\*

Nationally, there are more than 115,000 people whose primary employment is in the arts and creative sector. This was a 3.8% increase from March 2021 to March 2022. In Marlborough, more than 800 people are employed in the sector, a 0.7% increase

To foster flexible, inventive communities well-versed in technology, nurturing imaginative and inquisitive thinking is imperative. A region known for welcoming artists attracts and retains imaginative individuals, driving innovation and creating a cutting-edge and appealing area.

\* Infometrics 2022 Sector Profile – Arts and Creative, published November 2023.



# The role of Council

Council's assume multiple roles – that of facilitator, financier, collaborator, enabler, promoter, and overseer – all focused on enhancing cultural welfare.

While no single agency or organisation can provide a comprehensive solution, the Council, as the entity ultimately accountable for community welfare, stands in a prime position to take on the role of instigator and enabler.

Council shoulders the crucial responsibility of advocating for our creative community by influencing government bodies, the private sector and national collaborators. This involves championing Marlborough as a destination that attracts and retains talent, students, tourists and investments.

The recommendations in this strategy will not only benefit the creative community but will also feed into and help deliver the following:

- Te Taihū Intergenerational Strategy
- Marlborough District Council Long Term Plan
- Marlborough District Council Positive Ageing Strategy
- Destination Marlborough Destination Management Plan
- Marlborough Economic Wellbeing Strategy



## Council's role in fostering arts, culture and creativity is varied

### Leader

Council assumes diverse roles in nurturing a robust and dynamic arts sector. These roles encompass leadership, provision of facilities, funding distribution, policymaking, support, advocacy, and guardianship.

### Provider and promoter of facilities and amenities

As a provider and promoter, the Council becomes a custodian of valuable community assets. Te Kahu o Waipuna, parks and open spaces, community halls, are held in its stewardship.

### Policy maker and planner

The Council takes on the role of a policy maker and planner by owning and steering the Arts, Culture and Creativity Strategy, along with its comprehensive implementation plan. It evaluates progress against the objectives articulated in the plan and subsequently offers comprehensive reporting.

### Provider and distributor of funding

In its capacity as a provider and distributor of funding, the Council facilitates community grants. It effectively channels government grants through the Creative Communities Scheme, and actively facilitates the installation of regional artworks.

### Supporter and facilitator of groups and activities

Functioning as a supporter and facilitator, the Council dedicates staff time and resources to bolster arts and culture events. It extends the availability of Council-owned facilities to these endeavours, actively promotes community and cultural networks, and nurtures community groups toward achieving excellence.

### Advocate and promoter

As an advocate and promoter, the Council acknowledges and celebrates local talent, marking their contributions. It magnifies instances of excellence and positions Marlborough as a vibrant destination.



## Our Vision

Marlborough is creative, vibrant, inclusive, and thriving. Through collaboration the threads of creativity and innovation are seamlessly integrated into everything we do.

## Our Mission

To collaboratively establish the essential resources, platforms, skills and infrastructure to nurture the advancement of arts, culture and creativity in Marlborough.

## Strategy Pathways

This strategy, shaped by community insights, follows six essential pathways to achieve the envisioned outcomes.

Developed through public engagement, research and collaboration with iwi, these pathways serve as a blueprint for Marlborough's future arts and cultural vitality.

### Te Ara tutahi Facilities

A variety of venues for both performance and creation.

### Te Ara tuarua Education

Capability building programmes across the whole sector.

### Te Ara tuatoru Accessibility

Removing access barriers and promoting inclusivity.

### Te Ara tuawha Culture

Visible content that cultivates a deeper understanding of the region's diverse population and the region's unique cultural identity.

### Te Ara tuarima Visibility

Revealing local stories, talent and opportunities.

### Te Ara tuaono Communication

Making connections, facilitating creative partnerships, and the prominence of creatives in Marlborough is realised.

# Te Ara tuatahi Facilities

Our settings showcase Marlborough's identity as one of Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest settlements. Beyond artistic displays, our facilities aim to inject vitality into life through cultural vibrancy and communal activities, spanning the spectrum from creation and practice to exhibition and presentation.

Urban landscapes, including venues, open spaces, and parks will feature innovative infrastructure for artistic representation day and night, fostering collaborative and diverse ideas. Arts and culture extend beyond venues, captivating streets through creative placemaking collaborations, revitalising architectural structures and streetscapes.

Marlborough boasts successful arts spaces like Te Kahu o Waipuna and ASB Theatre, exceeding expectations in their localities and bringing immense value to the community. The Marlborough District Council has committed substantial financial resources to develop and maintain these artistic establishments, which hold considerable regional importance and consistently attract top tier shows and exhibitions.

Despite these achievements, there are notable deficiencies in our infrastructure, including the need for budget-friendly space for creation and a vibrant arts community. Alongside addressing existing gaps there is an imperative to concentrate on maximising the potential of current venues. This approach will breathe new life into buildings, streetscapes and structures, enhancing sustainability of local business.

## What we will see

- Increased opportunities for engaging in and observing creative activities
- Venues that are suitable for current and future needs
- Creative industries that are familiar with and capable of utilising Council procedures
- Involvement of artists and creative individuals in the initial phases of infrastructure projects
- Opportunities to experience the heritage and artistic expression of the region within our urban spaces



# Te Ara tuarua

## Education

To build a creative economy, we aim to strengthen ties with educational institutions and cultural organisations, creating pathways for the growth of our creative industries.

Our focus is on retaining individuals in their 20s and 30s in creative employment, expanding the market and capacity of creative industries, and celebrating arts institutions that contribute to employment in Marlborough.

We are committed to supporting emerging and expanding creative enterprises, particularly from underrepresented communities. The goal is not to teach creativity but to equip artists with essential tools for sustainable, thriving careers, including rarely taught business skills.

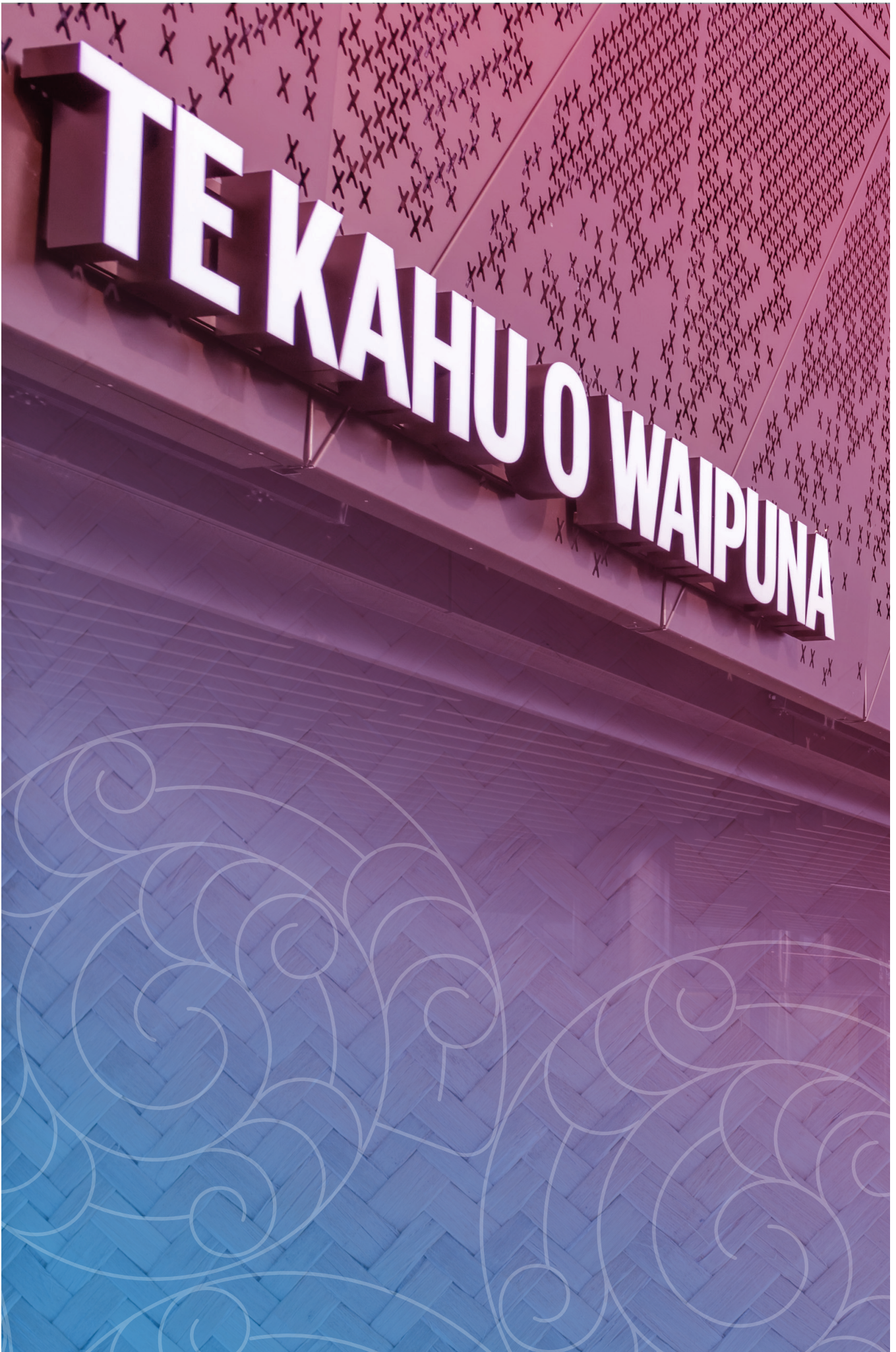
Through mentorship, grant application guidance, and skill development opportunities, we aim to position our creative sector as a local and national leader in arts, culture and creativity.

### What we will see

- Awareness and use of local practitioners
- Creative industries are sustainable in Marlborough
- Provided programs bring about a positive impact and foster growth in the creative sector
- Acknowledgement and celebration of Ngā toi Māori and Te Reo Māori
- Existing partnerships are nurtured, and new ones developed







# Te Ara tuatoru

## Accessibility

Our places and spaces will be accessible and affordable. They will be planned and equipped with the necessary infrastructure and technology to encourage dynamic and inclusive creative expression for all individuals.

It's important to recognise the diverse spectrum of individuals in our community and the various obstacles that might hinder their engagement. These barriers encompass factors such as transportation, childcare, distance, expenses, disabilities and mental health issues, among others. Our goal is for the entire community not just to enjoy and hold the arts in high regard, but also to actively partake in them.

As Marlborough grows, we will collaborate with the infrastructure developers to guarantee that arts, culture and creativity continue to invigorate our region, catering to all individuals. Budget-friendly, fitting, and easily reachable locations, environments and sites will be prevalent.

Through collaboration with artists, the practice of creative placemaking will infuse vitality into both public and private areas. This approach will breathe new life into buildings, streetscapes and structures, enhancing the sustainability of local businesses.

### What we will see

- Facilities offering affordable access to venues, spaces, and resources
- Creative thinkers and practitioners from all cultures and abilities are seen and celebrated
- Supported creativity through simple, efficient, enabling processes
- Creative spaces in Marlborough are inclusive and welcoming



# Te Ara tuawha

## Ngā toi Māori

A recent Creative New Zealand study shows over half of New Zealanders view the arts as a significant link to their cultural heritage, and two-thirds gain insights into diverse cultures through artistic expressions. Marlborough, one of Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest settlements and our home, is an ideal destination for accessible cultural treasures.

The Council acknowledges the mana whenua/tangata whenua of Te Taihū o te Waka iwi, committing to collaborate for favourable results for the Māori population. The eight iwi significantly contribute to the welfare of both the Māori community and society.

We recognise the importance of spaces shared with mana whenua/tangata whenua for arts and cultural expression. Our commitment is firm in collaborating to integrate Māori knowledge and narratives into the region's infrastructure, locales and environments for generations to come.

Dedicated to empowering the region as a hub for Ngā Toi Māori, we aim to centre Māori knowledge and promote it as Aotearoa's first knowledge system, reimagining our heritage roots to inspire and motivate.

Collectively, we will explore innovative avenues through which Māori can:

- Engage in the processes that influence Māori culture and its creations.
- Enable signature events including Matariki.
- Tell stories of our region and ensure that ngā toi Māori and te reo Māori are highly visible.
- Encourage respectful use of tikanga.

### What we will see

- Consultation with mana whenua /tangata whenua and Māori early and often
- Enhanced understanding and implementation of tikanga within Marlborough
- Increased use of te reo Māori
- A robust and flourishing Maori creative economy



# Te Ara tuarima

## Visibility

A captivating way of life garners national and international recognition, drawing in the necessary investment and skilled individuals required for a vibrant community and economy.

A visibly strong and collaborative leadership for the arts is crucial for creating an environment where artists can prosper, and the sector can grow.

Fostering advocates for the arts throughout the region is essential for promoting cross-sector involvement and embedding artistic expression into every facet of our existence. These advocates have the potential to enhance and solidify ties with the business and private sectors.

Marlborough boasts a lively and dynamic creative community; however, it frequently operates with limited visibility and insufficient backing to elevate its prominence. The creative community is ready for ambitious guidance, which will broaden our networks and generate prospects for investment.

- What we will see
- The rich layered history of Marlborough and its significance for Aotearoa New Zealand reflected in our creative and cultural landscape
- Enhanced national recognition of Marlborough as a flourishing hub for creative individuals
- A relevant digital presence of our creative industries
- Recognition of the arts' impact on the community's economy, health, and wellbeing
- A well connected and recognised creative sector in Marlborough





Rina Pinker, Te Pātaka o Wairau Night Market

# Te Ara tuaono

## Communication

In the creative sector, effective communication is crucial for collaboration and idea exchange within diverse teams.

It creates an environment where individuals can share insights, brainstorm innovative concepts, and work harmoniously.

The success of the creative sector depends on its capacity to connect with audiences. Skilful communication bridges the gap between creative vision and audience understanding. Thoughtful storytelling, engaging narratives, and interactive experiences deepen appreciation and build a loyal following.

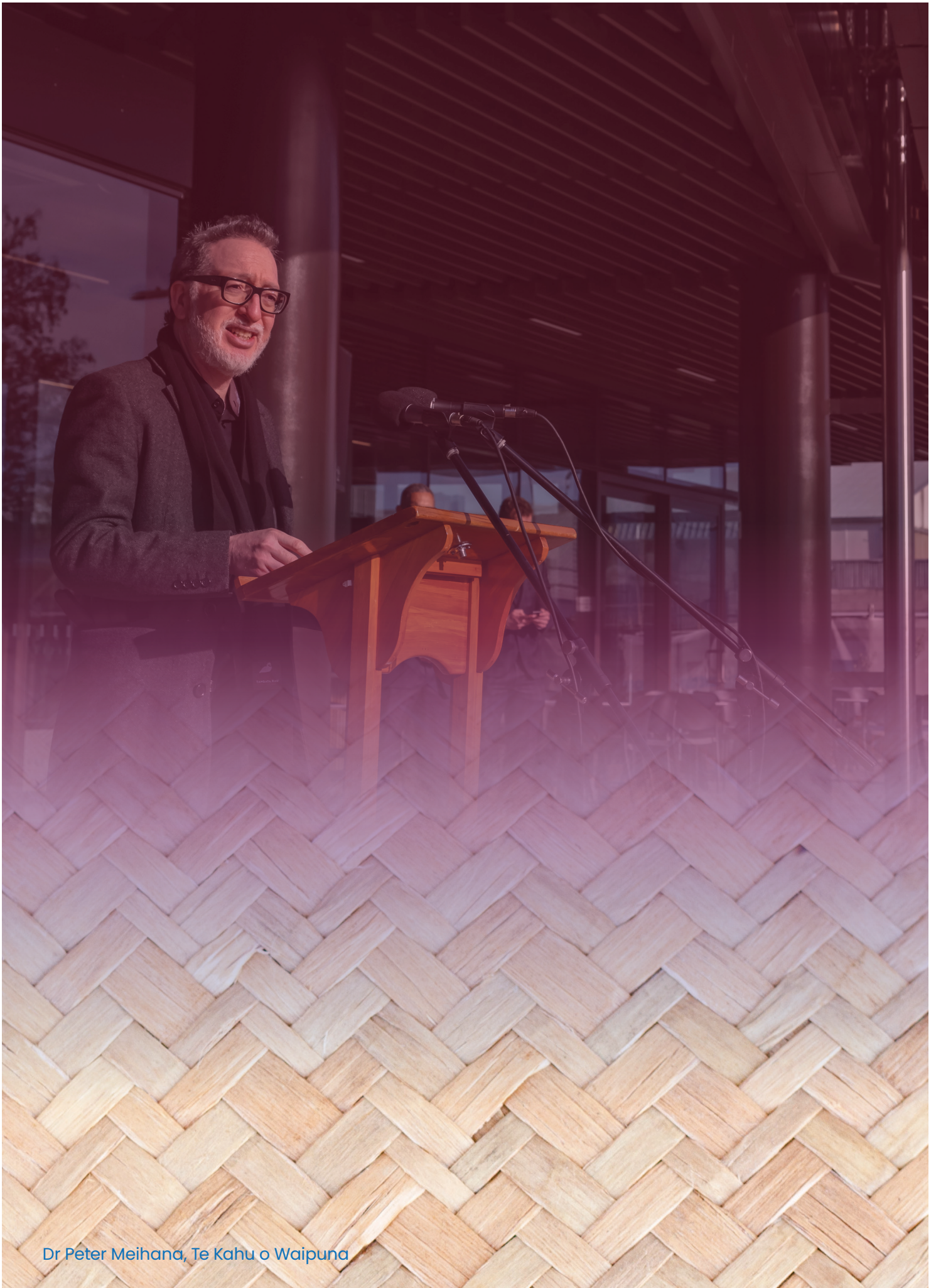
Advocating for the sector's needs requires clear communication of its societal and economic contributions to policymakers, sponsors and funders, ensuring sustained growth and vitality.

Networking events, workshops and industry gatherings facilitated by strong communication platforms create opportunities for artists, organisations, and professionals to connect, share knowledge, and expand their opportunities.

### What we will see

- A collaboratively designed, dynamic, and ever-evolving strategy nurtured through collaboration
- Effective communication and information sharing platforms
- Opportunities for establishing and nurturing relationships throughout the arts and creative sector
- Acknowledgment of the arts' contribution to the economy and suitable investment
- An alignment of primary stakeholders, e.g. performing arts, screen sector and writers.





Dr Peter Meihana, Te Kahu o Waipuna

# Appendix A

## Summary of engagement and consultation

This strategy replaces the 2008 Marlborough District Council Arts and Culture Strategy. Developed through a 12-month community engagement process, it aims to establish a synchronised, well-informed and cooperative approach in the arts, culture and creativity sector.

Input from arts advocates led to the adoption of a collaborative method, involving both the creative sector and the wider community.

In early 2023, the Arts Steering Group and the Iwi Advisory Panel, formed a partnership to conduct research, aid communication, and compose the strategy.

The first group, led by the MDC Project Lead for Arts, Culture and Heritage included representatives from various creative sectors including performing arts, literary arts, craft and objects, visual arts, and Pacific arts.

The second group, led by Dr Peter Meihana, focused on traditional Māori arts and culture with representation from the eight iwi of Te Taihū o te Waka.

The strategy's evolution involved workshops, consultations, written submissions, conversations and open forums.

In early 2023, community workshops gathered input on vital factors for Arts, Culture and Creativity to thrive in Marlborough. Participants ranked their responses by importance, discussed the Council's connection to the arts sector, community leadership, and identified skill gaps for creative success in the region. They also acknowledged Marlborough's strengths and achievements.

Over 130 individuals and organisations participated in workshops, and many in-person meetings occurred, shaping prevalent themes for subsequent online inquiries and discussions.

Several distinct themes were identified:

- The arts are crucial for storytelling, linking us to our history and place
- Creativity and innovation within the region find their foundation in the arts
- The arts have a tangible impact on daily lives
- Funding for the arts must be on par with other sectors e.g. sports
- Māori must be central in the planning and decision-making for the sector
- Improve communications on the benefits of the arts to the local economy
- Increased resources are needed including infrastructure and capability programs
- The strategy must translate into concrete, actionable initiatives

# Appendix B

## Definitions

### Tangata Whenua/Mana Whenua

are terms that are used by iwi in the Marlborough region to describe status and imply relationships and obligations.

### Culture

is our identity (owners)

### Arts

is the expression of our identity (users)

### Creativity

is the use of imagination to innovate

### Creative Economy

The creative economy involves utilising and generating novel ideas and innovations to propel economic activities. It encompasses various sectors such as arts, culture, design, media, advertising, technology and other knowledge-based industries.



The creative economy places value on ideas, innovation and cultural expression, recognising their economic potential. The concept highlights the economic impact of creativity and innovation in driving economic growth, creating jobs and fostering cultural development.

## The Arts

In this strategy, when we refer to the Arts, we encompass a broad array of disciplines (as defined by Creative New Zealand), including but not limited to:

### Craft/Object

The traditional applied arts and contemporary practices of all the peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Genres include, but are not limited to, ceramics, furniture, glass, jewellery, object making, studio-based design, raranga, tāniko, tapa making, textiles, tivaevae, typography and weaving.

### Community Art

Community arts are created by, with, and for a community – e.g. workshops or wānanga – participants are involved receptively in the learning, practice, presentation and appreciation of their traditional arts practices.

### Dance

Includes classical and contemporary dance; street, experimental and integrated dance; and traditional and contemporary Māori and Pacific Island dance.

### Interarts

Interarts projects integrate artforms of any cultural tradition, combining them to create a new and distinct work. The result of this integration is a hybrid or fusion of artforms outside of Creative New Zealand's artform categories.

### Literature

A broad, inclusive concept of writers and illustrators of fiction and non-fiction. Fiction includes novels, novellas, short stories, poetry, graphic novels, illustrated picture books, and speculative fiction such as fantasy fiction, science fiction, detective fiction, and historical fiction.

Non-fiction includes autobiography, biography, essays, social commentary, literary criticism, reviews, analytical prose and writing about the physical and natural sciences.

### Multi-disciplinary

Projects and activities that do not feature one main artform and that involve at least two different artforms, of any cultural tradition.

### Music

Includes classical and contemporary music; orchestral, choral, and band music; opera; jazz and improvised music; sound art; contemporary popular music; 'world' music; and traditional and contemporary Māori and Pacific Island music.

### Ngā toi Māori

Includes Māori heritage arts practice such as: taonga pūoro, tārai waka, Kaupapa waka, whakairo, raranga, tāniko, kākahu, tukutuku, kōwhaiwhai, tā moko, kapa haka, mōteatea, waiata ā-ringa, waiata tawhito, poi, waiata haka, pao, mau rākau, whaikōrero, karanga, whakapapa recitation, te reo me onā tikanga, kōrero paki, kōrero tuku iho, pakiwaitara, karetao, whare tapere and whakaraka. It also includes the work of Māori artists across all forms of contemporary arts practice.

### Pacific Arts

Includes Pasifika artists undertaking contemporary and heritage arts projects in all art forms.

### Theatre

Includes both classical and contemporary theatre, and all genres such as comedy, drama, physical theatre, devised theatre, street theatre, musical theatre, circus, puppetry, mask and theatre for children.

### Visual Arts

Includes drawing, experimental sound/audio and moving-image arts projects, installation, kōwhaiwha, painting, performance within a visual arts context, photography, printmaking, sculpture, tā moko and typography.



**MARLBOROUGH  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

[marlborough.govt.nz](http://marlborough.govt.nz)