



Regional Arts Network of Aotearoa

*Briefing to Arts, Culture
and Heritage Minister 2021*

The Regional Arts Network of Aotearoa (RANA) is an independent network of regional arts organisations operating across Aotearoa.

RANA seeks to develop a strategic relationship with Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage and Manatū Taonga - Ministry for Culture and Heritage

- to act as a source of information and advice on regional arts issues, and as a communications channel to regional communities of arts practitioners and organisations
- to collaborate on the development of a stronger regional arts, culture, and creative sector to support community wellbeing and resilience.

June 2021

Regional network, local connections

Collectively, the member organisations of RANA are uniquely positioned to provide insights and intelligence on the regions that we serve. As each organisation is interwoven with its community, we have first-hand knowledge of the needs of our regions, the key regional sector stakeholders, and the many and varied regional and local communities of arts practitioners and organisations. Our member organisations have diverse and ongoing relationships with creative people and organisations who are already doing the mahi but could use extra support.

Our regional connections can support the work of Manatū Taonga by:

- Providing a regional perspective on national initiatives
- Sharing regional updates, including identification of the barriers and opportunities present in each region
- Being a conduit for national to regional collaboration and activity
- Supporting effective regional sector development
- Supporting a joined-up approach to national strategy and policymaking through a regional lens.

A strong relationship between Manatū Taonga and RANA can be of particular value now as arts practitioners and organisations consider the post-COVID opportunity to collectively re-imagine the systems that are currently in place to support the arts, culture and creative sector. One significant opportunity we identify is to benefit community wellbeing by empowering local people to tell local stories.

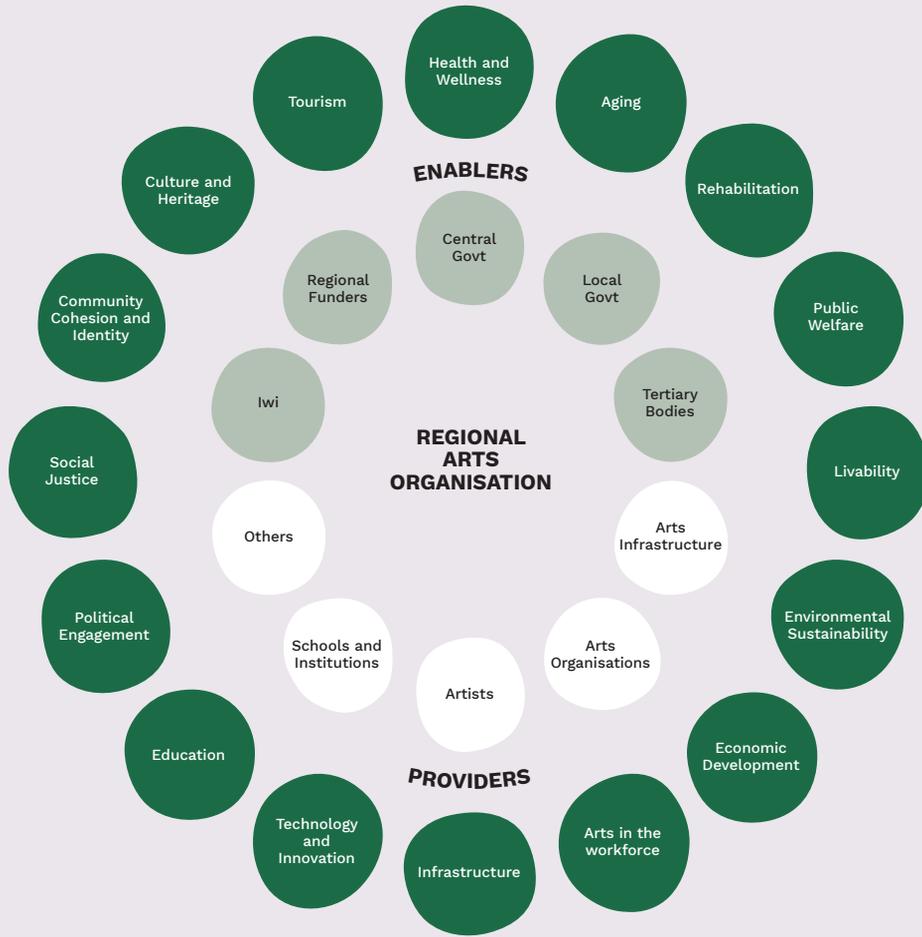
Regional arts organisations are best placed to support this local activity and increase the social impact of the arts in the wider social ecosystem.

Arts in the social ecosystem

Arts, culture, and creativity should be recognised as vital to and embedded within all facets of our community. They feed into a broader understanding of community, sense of place, and shared identity. When we collectively use arts-based approaches to express ourselves and solve social and civic problems, we move forward in an inclusive and engaging way. Our kaupapa is to be multidisciplinary and intergenerational while improving cultural diversity.

This diagram maps out an innovative, whole-of-system approach, which in turn would support the sustainability of the arts, culture, and creative sector, whilst also benefitting community well-being, and ensuring that our collective impact is more broad reaching and engaging.

Arts and cultural ecosystem within the broader society and community



Health and Wellness	Wellbeing for individuals Better care for each other Increased quality of life
Aging	Physical and mental stimulation Entertainment Social interaction
Rehabilitation	Purpose Self-care Social interaction Capability Development
Public Welfare	Community Pride Mutual trust Safer and healthier communities

Livability	Arts create vibrant cities Environmental impact Quality of Life
Environmental Sustainability	Education and Innovation Advocating and driving awareness Communication
Economic Development	Economic Wellbeing Support services and impact Sustainable Funding Workforce Development
Arts in the workforce	Well-rounded workers who drive innovation Creative thinkers Solid communicators

Infrastructure	Advocacy, communication, design, breaking down barriers Agriculture, Food, Transport, Housing, Planning and Community Development
Technology and Innovation	Symbiotic relationship for creation and development Technology can be used to create and disseminate art
Education	Arts are part of a well-rounded education Curiosity and exploration Important at all levels of education
Political Engagement	Can encourage political engagement, voting, and activation

Social Justice	Civic dialogue to discuss issues and policies Arts facilitate dialogue
Community Cohesion and Identity	Binds people together through shared experience Creates common vision for the future Arts bring people together
Culture and Heritage	Art activity Diversity/Access/ Identity History and Tradition
Tourism	Economic impact Empathy between communities Arts for travel

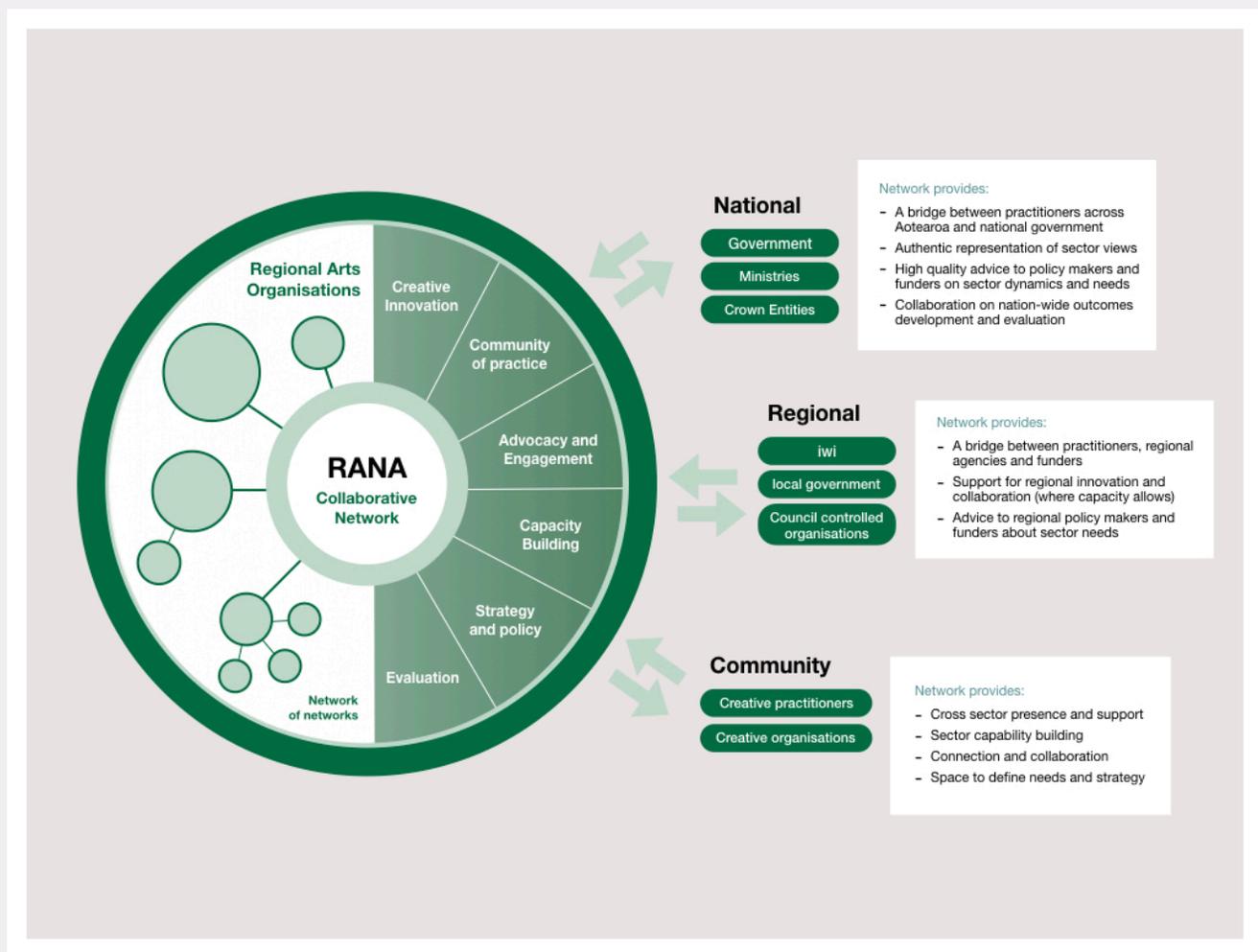
(diagram credit – Creative Waikato)

A stronger regional arts network would serve as an important strategic partner in this space, to support the creation of new connections, to enable collaborations, and to support the integration of arts-based thinking into all facets of society through engagement with key enablers.

A conceptual model for a stronger regional arts network

RANA has developed some thinking around a conceptual model for the medium to long-term development of a stronger network. This could be built around what already exists, with the goal of strengthening reach, community access, inclusion and the capability development not only of the sector, but the broader supporting ecosystem that engages with it.

This is a high-level conceptual model for this network. From our shared experience and community of practice, we can see there is clear scope for a more effective model for regional arts infrastructure and sector development, which is largely informed by the regional sports trusts model.



Conclusion

RANA sees strong alignment between the goals of the Minister and Manatū Taonga, and our own ambitions for the arts, culture and creative sector nationally and regionally. We would welcome the opportunity for regular engagement between this network and Manatū Taonga to inform the development of a stronger sector with an increased focus on regional needs, and to ensure more effective communication with regional arts communities.

Background

What are Regional Arts Organisations?

Regional Arts Organisations (RAOs) are non-profit entities that operate regionally across Aotearoa to provide strategic direction and support for sustainable arts, culture and creative development.

The strategic focus of each RAO is tailored in response to the needs, aspirations and strategic priorities of each region's arts, culture and creative sectors and communities. RAOs provide arts sector support, development and leadership. We also provide strategic guidance acting as independent intermediaries between the regional arts communities and other relevant stakeholders including local and central government. This relationship works towards creating an embedded understanding of the role arts, culture and creativity plays in community wellbeing.

Key activities delivered by the RAOs include:

- engagement and consultation with the arts sector and wider arts communities
- regional needs analysis
- development of regional arts strategies and advocacy
- sector capacity and capability development
- initiation and delivery of programmes of work that respond to regional arts priorities.

The RAOs also operate as a connected network (the Regional Arts Network Aotearoa [RANA]) to support shared goals.

The regional arts organisations within RANA operate as community of practice that supports regionally-focussed capability building within the arts and cultural sectors. Network members operate as strategic partners for regional engagement looking to enact positive sector impact as well as to proactively benefit community wellbeing throughout the arts and cultural ecosystem. To champion arts, culture and creativity as a public good, and to find new ways to support New Zealanders through the arts. Each Regional Arts Organisation is differently structured, and differently funded, but seeks to deliver on a set of shared outcomes. These overarching outcomes are:

- A thriving and connected creative sector
- Greater interconnectivity between arts organisations
- Broader investment and engagement with arts-based thinking in different areas of societal need and impact
- The serving of community wellbeing through access to arts, culture and creativity.

Our collective work through this network shares knowledge throughout the country. We seek to avoid unnecessary duplication by acknowledging that the needs of our communities and regions are different, and localised community knowledge can have the most impact.

Our Purpose

- To operate as a community of practice, enabling peer-to-peer networking and the sharing of knowledge and practice
- Strategic and coordinated advocacy to support investment in the arts, culture and creativity sector across the regions of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Strategic and coordinated advocacy for the value and ongoing development of the regional arts organisations as key regional-to-national arts infrastructure.

Our Shared Objectives

- Share regional research and intelligence to identify and collate evidence of national sector needs, gaps, aspirations and priorities
- Cross-pollinate effective practice and models of sector development across regions
- Facilitate regional-to-national collaboration
- Create a more connected platform for arts advocacy and collaborate on arts advocacy efforts to support increased valuing of the arts – particularly in relation to community wellbeing and regional creative economies
- Broker effective engagement by central government and other stakeholders with regional arts communities
- Proactively seek opportunities to bring regional voices into decision-making spaces that inform national arts strategy, policy and resourcing
- Support the development of more responsive national arts strategies and policies, to ensure that centralised arts sector resourcing is fit-for-purpose and aligned to regional needs/priorities
- Act as a strategic conduit to ensure COVID-response funding can reach into communities effectively at a regional level to support recovery
- Support the capacity of regional communities to access COVID-response and other centralised arts sector resourcing.

Network members



Creative Northland

Creative Northland is a regional entity responsible for arts, culture and heritage within the Te Tai Tokerau region, which includes three local authorities and nine iwi whose tribal boundary falls either partially or entirely within Te Tai Tokerau. We assist, advise, broker, facilitate and advocate for artists, arts organisation, community groups and support their creative and cultural development.



Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi

Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi is Auckland's arts regional trust. We contribute to the development of the arts and culture ecosystem that makes Tāmaki Makaurau a city alive with creativity. We work with the sector to advocate for the value of Ngā Toi arts, culture and creativity, to support sector development, build knowledge and practice, convene creative conversations and networks and promote collaborative investment in our region.



Creative Waikato

Creative Waikato is the regional arts organisation for the Waikato region, which includes 10 local authorities. We provide creative capability development for artists and arts organisations, advocacy, research, and strategic direction for sustainable arts, culture and creativity in our region. We are the navigators working toward a Waikato that prospers with diverse and transformative creative activity.



Creative Bay of Plenty

Creative Bay of Plenty was established in 1969 to serve the artists, creative producers, cultural organisations, and Western Bay. Our non-profit charitable trust is professionally managed by a team of four staff who support, promote, connect, and advocate for a thriving creative community. Together with civic and cultural partners our organisation guides the development and growth of the arts and culture sector and manages the two-Council Toi Moana Arts & Culture Strategy. Our programmes and services actively support artists, organisations, projects, events, and creative placemaking efforts. These include regular grant-giving, robust arts marketing and communications efforts, networking and professional development opportunities, and visionary collaborations and creative initiatives—always designed to share and expand the arts across our region.

Network members



Arts Wellington

The Wellington Regional Art & Cultural Development Trust (Toi o Taraika Arts Wellington) is a charitable trust that provides networking opportunities, communication platforms, advocacy and capability building forums for our membership base. Our members are made up of a number of the Greater Wellington region's professional arts, culture and heritage organisations, arts service organisations and education institutions.



Ngā Toi Hawke's Bay

Ngā Toi Hawke's Bay is the prominent advocate for the arts and culture in Hawke's Bay. Our responsibilities extend over the following local authorities: Central Hawke's Bay District, Hastings District, Napier City and Wairoa District. We work towards building and sustaining creative capability in our region.



Creative Taranaki

Creative Taranaki is a start-up regional collaboration that is currently establishing a Taranaki Regional Development Organisation to support, enable and grow the Arts, Creativity & Culture sector in Taranaki. To be formally established in 2021, it is supported by the Venture Taranaki - Taranaki 2050 Transition Roadmap, and local stakeholders.



Arts Council Nelson

Arts Council Nelson is involved in many community events and provides a variety of services through Nelson and Tasman Regions.



Arts Murihiku

Arts Murihiku aims to increase arts participation in the Southland, Queenstown, Glenorchy, Arrowtown, Tapanui and Heriot areas, support a new regional arts body and provide development training for artists and arts organisations. We're here to help artists and practitioners.

For more information, check out our website

www.rana.org.nz