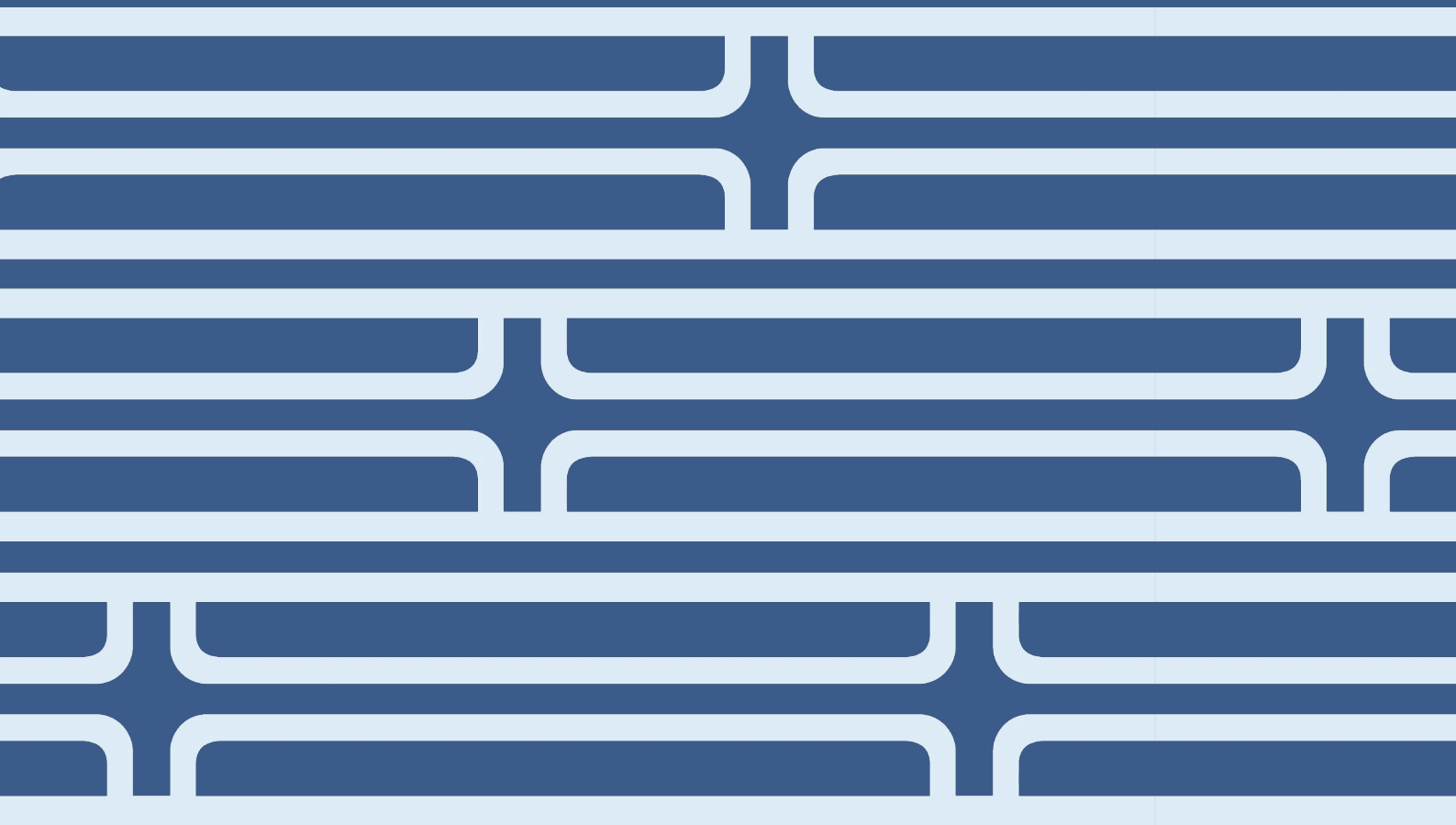


New Foundations

Amplifying the Arts in Whakatū

Transitioning Arts Council Nelson
into an arts development agency.





**Ehara taku toa i te takitahi,
engari he takitini kē.**

Our strength is collective.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines the next steps for the transition of Arts Council Nelson into an Arts Development Agency for Whakatū Nelson, including the establishment of a new charitable trust, new staffing structures, fundraising and communication strategies, and a refreshed strategic vision for the organisation. It represents another step forward in a multi-year journey which, through the support of Nelson City Council and the wider community, is enabling the arts sector to fully realise its potential.

In early 2022, Nelson City Council began development on He Tātai Whetū, Whakatū Nelson's Arts & Creativity Strategy, a ten-year blueprint to reinvigorate and better support our creative communities and economy, which was unanimously adopted by Council in August 2022. The strategy recommended the establishment of an independent development agency for the arts, as one of five key moves to be delivered early in the strategy's life, and identified Arts Council Nelson's potential to transition into the agency. In December 2022, the newly elected Council endorsed this approach, and has subsequently provided Arts Council Nelson with Better Off funding to enable this transition and, through the long-term plan, an increase in operational funding to support the functions of the new agency.

The value proposition of an independent development agency is made clear in He Tātai Whetū and is supported by our examination of similar organisations nationwide, being key in providing capability development, investment attraction, networking, publicity, and advocacy across a sector that can be highly fragmented. Serving as a connector and facilitator, the agency offers the opportunity to strengthen the sector's relationships, including with tourism, property development, and philanthropic support. Its independence offers a greater flexibility in responding to a dynamic and swiftly moving sector, including innovative funding models and clear representation of local needs.

The success of our arts ecosystems is dependent on creating favourable upstream conditions that enable artists, audiences, and communities to thrive. With its forward-looking vision and the committed investment from Nelson City Council, Arts Council Nelson's transition to an arts development agency will enhance its impact and pivotal role in promoting, professionalising, welcoming, and connecting the local arts community, ensuring a vibrant cultural future for Whakatū Nelson and enhancing its economic contribution to the local economy.

While many of these functions have increasingly been fulfilled by Arts Council Nelson over the past five years, the transition into the independent arts development agency will provide a more appropriate structure and better resourcing to deliver these services sustainably. Key to the success of the new agency is a long-term, strategic focus, and as such a sustainable funding model and appropriate resourcing has been key in shaping this transition plan. This plan takes a conservative assumption on funding beyond what has been committed by Council through the long-term plan, while also outlining a comprehensive funding strategy to support increased non-council funding levels.

The proposed levels of staffing, while commensurate with current committed funding levels, may place limits on the scope of the agency's remit that is able to be delivered in the short-term, as funding relationships are built and developed and as new functions are

established, such as the management of the new Arts Hub and the development of a major creative tourism initiative. As such, a strong relationship with Council is key, especially in understanding shared capacity limits, future aspirations and expectations for the agency, and the resourcing required to deliver further increases in levels of service.

The plan laid out across the following pages has been thoroughly tested against a range of assumptions, aided by innumerable conversations across the sector and with Council staff, and when implemented will create a sustainable foundation for an organisation that is certain to grow across the coming decades, supporting the continued growth in the social and economic contribution of the creative sector to our city as it does so.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Whakatū Nelson has a long history of creative activity and pride in our position as an artistic hub, with hundreds of years of Toi Māori practice in the region, the presence of some of Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest art institutions in The Suter Art Gallery, Theatre Royal, and Nelson Centre for Musical Arts, with success later driven by an influx of artists in the 1960s–70s, and sustained through notable national and international contributions like World of Wearable Arts and Nelson Arts Festival.

First established as the Nelson Provincial Arts Council in 1969, Arts Council Nelson (ACN) has been a vibrant hub, advisory body, and creative incubator, promoting, initiating, and supporting projects that strengthen the artistic and cultural life of the region for over 50 years. Through its leadership and facilitation, ACN has played a key role in shaping Whakatū Nelson's creative industries, with a core focus on community participation and engagement informing its purpose and activities.

Notable recent initiatives include:

- **Nelson Jewellery Week (NJW):** Established in 2021, NJW has become an inclusive platform for makers and wearers, bringing an international audience to Nelson every two years.
- **Nelson Clay Week (NCW):** Established in 2022, NCW has seen rapid success as a key national and international event for ceramic artists, with its 2024 event seeing over 13,000 attendees across 10 events, 14 gallery exhibitions, and 28 workshops.
- **Refinery ArtSpace:** A gallery for regular exhibitions featuring local, national, and international artists, with 30 exhibitions and over 30,000 users across the 2023/24 financial year.

ACN's historic contributions also include partnerships that have spurred significant initiatives like the establishment of the Nelson Community Arts Centre (The Artery), Arts Marketing, World of Wearable Art (WOW), Nelson Arts Festival, Art in Windows, and the Shared Communities Consortium.

Leadership and Team

ACN's long-serving Community Manager, Lloyd Harwood, has led the organisation since 1997. The team includes Refinery ArtSpace Manager Janja Heathfield and Administrator

Heidi Lucas, with the recent appointment of contractors Special Projects and Events Manager Andy Meldrum, and Communications and Marketing Lead Lil della Porta, supporting its Creative Tourism initiative with Nelson City Council. Operational support and consultation from the ACN Committee has been instrumental in its success.

Community Engagement

For nearly four decades, ACN has engaged a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

- Creative spaces and creatives of all forms, including jewellers, ceramicists, digital and film artists, textile artists, thespians, musicians, and weavers.
- Toi Māori, tangata Moana, migrant, emerging, and self-taught artists.

Current partnerships span various organisations and events, such as:

- Nelson Fringe Festival
- Nelson Festivals Trust / Nelson Arts Festival
- Community ArtWorks
- Cultural Conversations
- Shared Communities
- Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology
- MakeShift Spaces

Community Impact

Arts Council Nelson's core focus has always been centred around supporting community success, incubating great ideas and initiatives. It has impacted tens of thousands of people through its activities, events and advisory services, as well as through its partnerships with, and support of, other community-based arts organisations including Community Art Works, Magenta Creative Space, Wakatū Dance Theatre Trust, and Cultural Conversations. These impacts cross both measurable metrics, like attendance numbers, funding, and survey results, and the numerous intangible impacts that connection to the arts provides to our community.

Organisational Sustainability

As Arts Council Nelson has expanded its remit in response to community demand, it has had to grapple with the challenges of maintaining its current level of service. Despite its rich history as a cornerstone of Whakatū's artistic community and a facilitator of significant cultural initiatives, ACN faces pressures of organisation growth. Notable projects like NJW and NCW are experiencing substantial attendance and engagement from across Aotearoa and beyond have led to substantial expansion of what ACN delivers, especially in regards to Cultural Tourism. At the same time, the demand for ACN's overall services is also at an all-time high. The organisation faces pressures around limited staffing and leadership capacity, and a funding environment that increasingly favours diversification.

Balancing its commitment to community engagement and support for diverse artistic expressions requires not only sustained funding but also innovative strategies at an operational level to ensure strong leadership, efficient processes, and new revenue streams.

As ACN moves forward, addressing these sustainability challenges will be critical to ensuring it can continue its mission of fostering creativity and cultural vibrancy in Whakatū, ultimately benefiting the region's artists and the wider community.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

He Tātai Whetū

The initiative to establish an independent development agency for the arts and Arts Council Nelson's transition into this organisation is born out of He Tātai Whetū, Whakatū Nelson's Arts & Creativity Strategy, adopted by Nelson City Council in 2022.

He Tātai Whetū identified several key areas identified in for improvement:

Advocacy - The sector needs a stronger voice and more resources to attract investment

Support - Artists and organisations need more support in funding and making ideas happen.

Collaboration - There must be a greater focus on working together to connect and align activity.

Succession - A stronger emphasis on the need to ensure intergenerational skills are being passed on and our arts organisations and initiatives have succession plans in place.

While these are all areas in which Arts Council Nelson is currently investing in, transitioning to the Arts Development Agency will strengthen its offering, with more dedicated focus and resourcing, and its position as a coordinator across the creative sector enabling greater efficiencies and concerted efforts across organisations, businesses, and individuals.

Taonga Tuku Iho

Adopted by Nelson City Council in 2022, Taonga Tuku Iho is Whakatū Nelson's ten-year heritage strategy. The role of arts and creativity is a key element of the strategy and a crucial tool in the creation and passing on of our history and heritage. The arts development agency will have an important role in supporting the continued practice of telling local stories and building local identity and belonging.

Te Ara ō Whakatū

Te Ara ō Whakatū, Nelson's city centre spatial plan, approved by Nelson City Council outlines a vision for reinvigorating the city centre, with identity and arts a core part of this work. The arts development agency will need to engage closely to support the further integration of creativity into both the direct urban fabric of the city, and in ensuring activation of the city centre with events, art works, and other creative endeavours.

Other key strategies

In addition to the above strategies, the establishment of an arts development agency and this plan also contributes to and exists in dialogues with a range of other strategies held by Nelson City Council and other organisations, including:

- The City for All Ages Strategy
- Nelson Tasman Destination Management Plan
- Te Taihu Intergenerational Strategy
- Nelson City Council Long Term Plan (2024 – 2034)
- Nelson Tasman Regeneration Plan
- Te Taihu Iwi Strategic Plans

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Across New Zealand, arts councils, creative incubators and the newer art development agencies reflect the unique character, institutions, and creative leadership of their regions adapting to local needs. As part of this transition, we examined three case studies from around the motu.

Creative Bay of Plenty demonstrates a strategic partnership approach to advocacy, capacity building, and significant community engagement initiatives. Toi Ōtautahi in Christchurch showcases the importance of digital outreach and collaboration in enhancing local artistic expression, while Te Atamira in Queenstown exemplifies a successful independent hub model focusing on accessibility and diverse programming. Collectively, these examples illustrate a dynamic arts ecosystem that fosters creativity, inclusion, and economic development, despite facing challenges such as funding constraints.

To be able to achieve this wide range of needs requires consistent funding and a dedication to fundraising initiatives with the community.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In transitioning Arts Council Nelson into an independent development agency for the arts, a host of operational and governance changes will need to be implemented. These include its transition into a charitable trust, strengthened governance, new strategically focused roles, and additional core focuses. Alongside this, its success is dependent on the strength of its partnerships and broad community buy-in, relying on the continuation of Arts Council Nelson's legacy as a 'for community, by community' organisation, and the strong influence and engagement of local practitioners. This section outlines the proposed blueprint for achieving this transition that, while subject to change and influence by the incoming board, will deliver to the goals established in He Tātai Whetū.

OPERATIONS

The Arts Development Agency will retain many aspects of Arts Council Nelson's current operational focus, alongside expansion and fostering wider community development. The agency's role will increase its capacity to provide services to other arts organisations and initiatives, while increasing community engagement and accessibility in the arts. Crucial to this expansion is taking a long-term view to ensure the services can be delivered sustainably from both a personnel and financial perspective.

Gallery and Arts Hub

The Arts Development Agency will continue to offer its gallery services, currently delivered under the Refinery ArtSpace branding. With the proposed development of the Arts Hub by Nelson City Council, the scope of this part of the organisation's operations is likely to expand significantly. As currently proposed, the Arts Hub would include shared office facilities, artist workshops, and venues for community events, performances, and exhibitions - serving not only as a focal point for our creative communities, but also facilitating greater community interaction and engagement with the arts. This expansion will require careful planning in terms of resources, staff time, and infrastructure, with the additional resourcing needed to be managed across the organisation.

Expanded Arts Development

The agency will focus on nurturing the wider arts sector through the strengthening of partnerships and pathways available for artists and practitioners, supporting the competencies of arts administrators and the wider supporting infrastructure that enables our creative practices, and by simplifying engagement with the sector for external parties.

Through its partnerships and flexibility, the agency will accelerate and amplify the contribution of the creative sector to the local economy and support for sustainable arts careers within the region. Initiatives like residencies, creative tourism development, events and festivals, and innovative funding models will all contribute to a more resilient, dynamic and accessible ecosystem.

Through its employment of dedicated skilled staff in project management and communications, community arts advisers, and in its cross-sector partnerships, the agency will facilitate greater efficiencies for local arts organisations and practitioners, enabling a continued focus of delivery and community participation across the sector, increased innovation, and a lowering of the barriers to entry present in the region.

Inclusive programming and community-driven decision-making

The long history of Arts Council Nelson's success has been predicated on the strength of community buy-in and the ability of local creatives to shape the direction of the organisation, underpinned by a strong community art focus. Inclusive programming and community-driven decision-making are vital for fostering a vibrant arts culture and delivering to the intentions of He Tātai Whetū.

In recognition of this, the agency will continue to engage closely with the local community, providing opportunities for input and a sense of collective ownership of the agency's focus and direction. This will include the establishment of a dedicated advisory committee that includes diverse members from various backgrounds of our community to guide audience development strategies to ensure that programmes are accessible and resonate with the community and support gallery programming, and creation of a membership programme to support community buy-in and financial stability.

Additionally, the agency will prioritise creating accessible processes and activities that empower individuals from all walks of life to participate actively in the arts, enriching the cultural fabric of Whakatū and enhancing the overall impact of the agency on the community.

PARTNERSHIPS & PATHWAYS

The arts sector can be highly fragmented and representative of a wide range of genres, creative professionals, well established organisations, small community groups, sole practitioners and casual participants. This new organisation is proposed to become the “glue” that holds the sector together, as a connector and facilitator alongside Council and other organisations.

As a single point of contact for the wider sector, the ability of the development agency to develop partnerships both within the creative sector, and with other industry sectors such as tourism and construction is crucial. Through the new director role, who will be responsible for many of these relationships, and its improved internal capacity the agency will work to be a trusted voice of the arts sector, an easy partner and facilitator of innovative projects, and a broker and coordinator of philanthropic support.

NELSON CITY COUNCIL

The agency’s relationship with Nelson City Council is key to its success, as both a core funder and a key player in the wider arts sector and in the delivery of He Tātai Whetū, at both a governance and an operational level. While these relationships are currently strong, as Arts Council Nelson transitions to the arts development agency, it is important to ensure the structures and processes are in place to maintain this high degree of trust and communication.

It is proposed to maintain the existing format of a governance level liaison appointed by Nelson City Council, and that a shared work plan is developed on areas of collaboration and cross-over between the agency and the Nelson City Council Arts and Heritage team. As a core funder, it is recommended that the relationship move primarily to a grant based funding model, reflecting the wide remit entrusted to the agency by Nelson City Council and to facilitate the benefits of flexibility and innovation envisioned in He Tātai Whetū.

It is expected that the relationship with Nelson City Council will continue to develop as the agency is established, including exploring potential innovations to better work alongside one another and with the community, including the possibility of co-location of parts of the Nelson City Council arts team within an Arts Hub, or other opportunities as they arise.

IWI PARTNERSHIP

The transformation of Arts Council Nelson into an arts development agency holds the crucial opportunity and obligation to explore how the organisation’s relationship with ngā iwi e waru o Te Taihū o te Waka-a-Māui can also be transformed, for the benefit of all partners and the wider community.

He Tātai Whetū expressed the requirement to better tell the stories of our whenua and reflect the sense of collective identity present across Te Taihū. In particular, there is a clear need to lift the visibility of Toi Māori and tangata whenua identity that has long failed to be reflected in wider Whakatū Nelson, as a product of colonisation and dispossession.

The arts development agency has the potential to play a strong role supporting and partnering in the development of Toi Māori for our community. Arts Council Nelson already takes a proactive approach to supporting rangatōi Māori, and Toi Māori programming through the Refinery Artspace has increased considerably in recent years. Existing relationships and strong alignment within the organisation positions Arts Council Nelson well to build on this work and ensure the new arts development agency is both responsive to and in service of the aspirations of tangata whenua in Whakatū.

With the collective adoption of He Tātai Whetū by ngā iwi o Te Taihū, investment in developing capacity within Toi Māori, the launch of Kopū, and deepening collaboration between iwi and council on cultural events, this aspect of the He Tātai Whetū strategic direction has progressed strongly, and it is incumbent on the arts development agency to play its role in supporting these workstreams. Further, with the region having the opportunity to host Te Matatini in 2027 and the tens of thousands of people in attendance for the event, the agency will have a crucial role to help facilitate the alignment of the arts sector and to help ensure cultural capability in the lead up to this prestigious event.

To do this, the arts development agency needs to position itself as a culturally equipped and responsive organisation, ready to partner and support projects and initiatives where appropriate, as well as building internal cultural capacity. While these are dynamic relationships that will shift and change over time, establishing the agency through a bi-cultural lens and as a willing Te Tiriti partner will ensure alignment with iwi and responsiveness to tangata whenua more broadly.

Agreement will be sought between the agency, Nelson City Council, and iwi on the appropriate form of partnership, whether as a new relationship, umbrellaed under the Kia Kotahi te Taihū | Together Te Taihū partnership agreement, or another form as envisioned by iwi, including the potential reservation of governance positions for iwi representatives (if desired by iwi).

Additionally, continual investment will be made in lifting the cultural capability of the agency's staff and board, alongside the future development of a Toi Māori strategy, to outline the organisation's role in supporting the development of Toi Māori practice, whether directly or through support of iwi-led initiatives - recognising in any case the obligation to proactively lift the visibility of Toi Māori in the region.

ARTS ORGANISATIONS

To deliver its aims in arts development, the agency will need to build upon its relationships with other arts organisations. This includes local galleries, community arts organisations, festival and event organisers, and our major arts institutions like the Theatre Royal, NCMA, and The Suter Art Gallery.

Through these organisational partnerships the agency will further strengthen pathways for creatives and arts advocates, working to elevate and celebrate their work, offering resources and facilitating collaboration and communication. Initial investment will be required to carry across the existing trust present with Arts Council Nelson, and to begin work to expand the breadth of these partnerships.

The agency will continue to host regular networking events such as the successful “Hot Chips” events, alongside providing other ways for the sector to come together, and begin development of a ‘sector map’ to capture and hold a collaborative database of organisations, individuals and their work, helping to avoid duplication and to support the finding of partnerships and collaborators for new projects and initiatives, as well as the uplifting of existing events/offerings.

OTHER AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS

The agency’s long term commitment to professional development opens opportunities for partnerships with agencies like the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, the Ministry of Social Development, Nelson Regional Development Agency, and the Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce. Expanding programmes like the Chamber of Commerce’s mentorship initiative to include creatives and job seekers can provide new partnership opportunities, while collaborative creative projects - such as short films or internships - can expose participants to diverse opportunities while fostering skills development.

It is anticipated that a partnership will also be developed with Arts Access Aotearoa to develop an Accessibility Policy for the arts development agency that ensures the organisation is both physically and digitally accessible to all.

Alongside this, the agency will, over time, build resourcing to be able to produce business cases and investment prospectuses for these organisations and other relevant parties.

GOVERNANCE

To support the wider remit entrusted to the independent agency for the arts, open new funding opportunities, and strengthen its delivery, a new governance structure is required with a greater mix of professional governance skills around the table and a diverse range of voices from our community. This will involve the establishment of a new charitable trust, the dissolution of the Arts Council Nelson Incorporated Society, and recruitment of a new trust board.

Charitable Trust Establishment

Arts Council Nelson Incorporated (ACN) has been an incorporated society since 1997 and as part of the transition process legal advice was sought to consider transitioning to a charitable trust to better cater to its future needs, with the recommendation that the organisation shift to this structure.

The Arts Council Nelson Executive Committee approved the transition recommendation on 18 September 2024, with this motion also being raised at the Arts Council Nelson AGM 16

October 2024. Work has since been completed on the development of a new trust deed and a detailed timeline for the legal transition established.

The trust will have a minimum of three trustees and a maximum of nine, with a standard operating arrangement consisting of five to seven members.

Board Recruitment

Following the endorsement of this transition plan, recruitment for a new trust board is beginning shortly, led by Arts Council Nelson with support from Nelson City Council.

A brief of necessary skills will be developed alongside Nelson City Council staff, including knowledge and connection to the local arts community, financial acumen, strategic planning, as well as governance skills and experience. Further to this, a diversity of age, gender and culture will be key in reflecting and representing the diversity of the Whakatū community.

Alongside this, Nelson City Council will continue to appoint a liaison to the board, as they have with the Arts Council Nelson executive, to ensure the close connection and communication between the organisations.

As part of the appointment of initial trustees, the Arts Council Nelson Executive will develop a shortlist in consultation with ACN staff, relevant arts organisations and practitioners, and Nelson City Council staff. This shortlist will then be presented to the He Tātai Whetū Taskforce for endorsement or feedback.

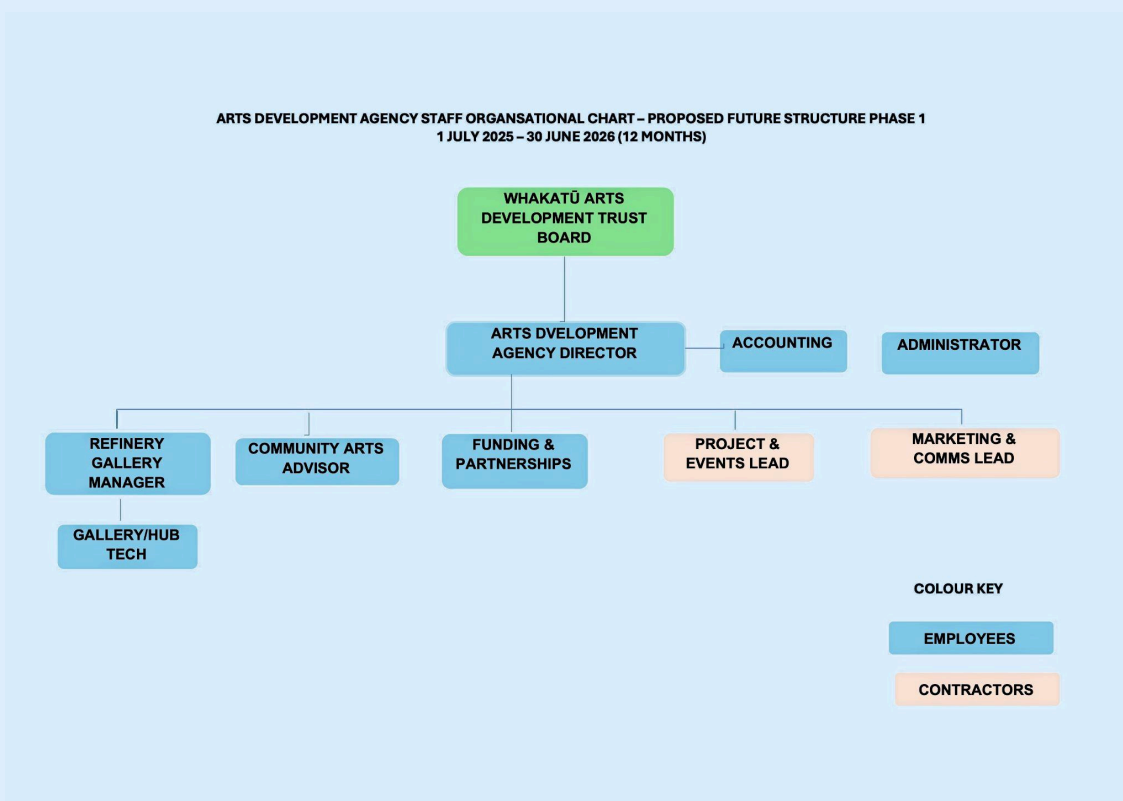
Accountabilities

In addition to the legal responsibilities, the board and wider organisation will hold key accountabilities to the wider community, its partner organisations, Nelson City Council, and the arts sector. As part of the new trust's funding agreement with Nelson City Council, it is expected that a requirement to produce and present a Statement of Intent to Council be included, to ensure public visibility and transparency of the organisation's operations.

Further, as part of the Board's annual assessment, it is expected that the new board will develop a survey and feedback mechanism for partners and community to contribute to the evaluation process and reflect the community driven nature of its work.

PROPOSED ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

There is a two phase transition underway for staffing. For the three months, from the end of March 2025, an Arts Council Nelson appointed Committee member will be engaged to oversee critical tasks to ensure the timeline of the transition is on track, while recruitment is underway for the new leadership position of an arts development agency director. Following the establishment of the trust and recruitment of these roles, the organisation will operate under the new structure outlined below:



BUDGET

In ensuring the financial viability of the new agency, consideration has been given to staged growth and the development of both internal and non-council external funding to support operations. This includes retaining some roles as contract-based until long-term income can be secured, the development of a membership programme, and examining the potential for increasing gallery revenue. This process, and the development of a treasury policy and wider organisational financial strategy, will continue through the transition process with the appointment of a new board.

The projected budget for the upcoming years is structured around four key activity areas:

- ADA Operations – Core administrative and leadership functions to ensure smooth operations and strategic growth.
- CCS Grant Funding – Support for local community arts initiatives through grant distribution.
- Special Events/Projects – Delivery of our unique arts programmes i.e Nelson Clay Week, Nelson Jewellery Week as well as public engagement initiatives, and collaborative projects.
- Refinery Gallery – Management and development of the gallery as a key arts and cultural hub.

2025/26 Financial Year

Transitional Phase and Organisational Strengthening

Carry-over funds from the allocated transition budget (2024/25) will be utilised to:

- Upgrade operational systems to enhance efficiency and sustainability.
- Develop new governance policies, including board development and operational guidelines.

Key Staffing Changes

To ensure the organisation is fit for purpose, a new leadership structure is introduced. This includes the appointment of an arts development agency Director, supported by:

- Fundraising and Partnerships Manager – Focused on securing new funding streams, sponsorships, and other key partners.
- Events Project Manager – Overseeing the planning and execution of special projects and public engagement initiatives. Contract role.
- Marketing and Communications Lead – Responsible for audience development, branding, and stakeholder communication. Contract role.
- Accounting Support – Ensuring financial compliance, reporting, and budget management.

Additionally, the Community Arts Manager role will be reduced to a 0.8 FTE to align with the organisation's new strategic focus.

Note: The Events & Project Manager and Marketing & Communications Lead roles will remain contract positions until further funding is secured and the agency has the financial confidence to move to future employment roles.

Strategic Priorities for 2025/26

- Build relationships with potential new stakeholders including core funders and sponsors.
- Develop and launch a membership/donor programme to generate philanthropic support.
- Strengthen governance and operational structures to position the organisation for long-term success.

Budget Overview FY 2025/26

Income - FY 2025/26	
ADA Operational Income	
Council Funding (NCC + TDC, inc. carry forward)	\$367,769.00
External Grants and Sponsorship	\$66,000.00
Other income (interest, membership and fundraising)	\$5,000.00
Subtotal ADA Operational Income	\$438,769.00
CCS Grant Funding	
CCS Grant Income - Nelson City Council	\$46,550.40
NCC CCS promotion	\$6,000.00
Subtotal CCS Grant Funding	\$52,550.40
Event/Project Income	

ADA Projects income (including project management)	\$18,800.00
Events - Sponsorships and Workshop sales	\$163,000.00
TUKU Festival Projects	\$20,000.00
Subtotal Event/Project Income	\$201,800.00
Refinery Gallery Income	
Council Grant	\$42,340.00
Refinery Commissions and Rental	\$26,000.00
Subtotal Refinery Gallery Income	\$68,340.00
Total Income	\$761,459.40
Expenses - FY 2025/26	
ADA Operational Expenses	
Subtotal ADA Operational Expenses	\$409,168.00
CCS Grant Funding	
Subtotal CCS Grant Funding	\$54,426.00
Event Project Expenses	
Subtotal Event Project Expenses	\$221,800.00
Refinery Gallery Expenses	
Subtotal Gallery Expenses	\$81,342.00
Total Expenses	\$766,736.00

2026/27 Financial Year

Transition to External Funding and Financial Sustainability

- All key roles outlined above will continue into 2026/27.
- The organisation will shift towards the inclusion of other external funding sources to maintain and sustain the core team.
- To ensure financial stability, a detailed Funding Strategy has been developed.

Strategic Priorities for 2026/27

- Implementation of the Funding Strategy to secure diverse revenue streams.
- Strengthening partnerships with philanthropic bodies, corporate sponsors, and grant providers.
- Expanding audience engagement and revenue-generating programmes.

Budget Overview FY 2026/27

Income - FY 2026/27	
ADA Operational Income	
Council Funding (NCC + TDC)	\$259,507.00
External Grants and Sponsorship	\$140,000.00
Other income (interest, membership and fundraising)	\$15,000.00
Subtotal ADA Operational Income	\$414,507.00

CCS Grant Funding	
CCS Grant Income - Nelson City Council	\$46,550.40
NCC CCS promotion	\$6,000.00
Subtotal CCS Grant Funding	\$52,550.40
Event/Project Income	
ADA Projects income (including project management)	\$24,392.00
Events - Sponsorships and Workshop sales	\$98,000.00
TUKU Festival Projects	\$20,000.00
Subtotal Event/Project Income	\$142,392.00
Refinery Gallery Income	
Council Grant	\$43,187.00
Refinery Commissions and Rental	\$26,000.00
Subtotal Refinery Gallery Income	\$69,187.00
Total Income	\$678,636.40
Expenses - FY 2025/26	
ADA Operational Expenses	
Subtotal ADA Operational Expenses	\$381,004.00
CCS Grant Funding	
Subtotal CCS Grant Funding	\$56,590.00
Event Project Expenses	
Subtotal Event Project Expenses	\$164,000.00
Refinery Gallery Expenses	
Subtotal Gallery Expenses	\$80,282.00
Total Expenses	\$681,876.00

FUTURE POTENTIAL

While the current transition plan establishes a strong foundation for the arts development agency, there are several high-impact kaupapa that warrant consideration as our capacity and resources grow. These opportunities represent potential next steps in our evolution, each building upon our core strengths while opening new possibilities for our creative community.

Toi Māori Development

A dedicated service and resource center for Toi Māori development:

- Specialist roles supporting Māori artists and practitioners
- Dedicated exhibition and workshop spaces
- Ring fenced funding for Toi Māori initiatives
- Deep partnership with iwi and māta waka artists

Digital Evolution Platform

A comprehensive digital ecosystem supporting our creative sector:

- Virtual exhibition and performance spaces
- Artist directory and marketplace
- Resource sharing platform
- Professional development hub
- Live streaming capabilities

Creative Industries Incubator

Supporting the development of sustainable creative enterprises:

- Business development wānanga
- Shared workspace facilities
- Industry mentorship programmes
- Market development support
- Innovation funding pilots

Research & Development Unit

Building sector knowledge and capability:

- Sector research and analysis
- Impact measurement frameworks
- Policy development
- Funding model innovation
- Best practice documentation

Cultural Tourism Expansion

Expanding our existing events into year-round offerings:

- Curated artistic and cultural experiences
- Tourism sector partnerships
- Artist residency programmes
- International exchange initiatives
- Creative tourism product development

These kaupapa would require significant additional investment in both people and resources, but they represent exciting possibilities for our future growth. They align with both our strategic direction and the broader vision of He Tātai Whetū, while building on the strong foundation we are establishing through our current mahi.

The key is to hold these possibilities as inspiration while maintaining focus on our core deliverables, implementing each new initiative only when the time and resources are right to ensure success.

DRAFT VISION & VALUES

Arts Council Nelson has been an important facilitator, catalyst and contributor to the vibrant arts culture of Whakatū and the new trust will continue to deliver this newly developed vision and mission from 1 July 2025.

TE MOEMOEĀ | VISION

The Whakatū Creative Community is connected, dynamic, accessible and thriving for the benefit of all.

TE KOROMAKINGA | MISSION

To promote, strengthen and celebrate the artistic and cultural life of our communities.

HE POU RAUTAKI | STRATEGIC PILLARS

Aligning with the strategic pillars of He Tātai Whetū, these will guide the work of the new agency:

HE POU RAUTAKI	Description	Workstream Examples
Participation How do we increase engagement?	The arts development agency (ADA) will proactively increase engagement and support participation by offering a wide range of accessible events and opportunities catering to diverse demographics and addressing barriers such as physical disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering special projects, inclusive events, and a comprehensive programme of exhibitions. - Implementing marketing campaigns to raise awareness and develop platforms for engagement. - Enhancing investment, visibility, and recognition of Ngā Toi Māori.
Identity How do we tell stories that reflect us?	The ADA plays a crucial role in assisting the creative community in sharing narratives that resonate with their identities and experiences, fostering a sense of belonging within the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborating with local artists and storytellers to curate community-focused storytelling events. - Supporting projects that highlight diverse cultural expressions through various art forms (e.g., visual arts, performance, literature). - Creating grants or funding opportunities specifically for projects that explore and celebrate local identity.

<p>Infrastructure How do we resource our artists so that they can achieve?</p>	<p>The ADA will be a central contact point to support the strategic development of the arts sector by securing sustainable funding, increasing opportunities, and fostering connectivity among artists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing business cases and pitch ideas to secure funding opportunities for the arts. - Advocating for sustainable creative pathways and long-term funding solutions within the sector. - Facilitating expertise in commissioning public artworks and managing large-scale projects. - Establishing networks with philanthropic organisations to secure funding for the arts sector.
<p>Place-making How do we come together and create a space for each other?</p>	<p>Place-making involves creating inclusive and welcoming spaces that foster collaboration, interaction, and a sense of community among artists and audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising sector networking events to promote collaboration and support among artists and organisations. - Developing a membership model for the ADA to strengthen community ties and resource sharing. - Identifying and transforming public spaces into arts-friendly venues to encourage creative expressions.
<p>Creative Economy How do we create opportunities for our creative sector and artists?</p>	<p>The independence of the ADA will enable it to explore and pilot innovative funding models, addressing equity and sustainability for the creative sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigating and piloting arts equity initiatives to ensure fair distribution of resources. - Creating underwriting and lending schemes to support artists and organisations in need of financial assistance. - Building partnerships with local businesses and industries to create new opportunities and marketplaces for artists.

IMPLEMENTATION

Following the endorsement of this plan by Nelson City Council on the 1st of May, the final steps required to formally establish are being completed. This has included the decision by the members of Arts Council Nelson Incorporated to wind up and transfer operations to the new trust entity and ongoing engagement with community, stakeholders, and staff. A high-level outline of next steps is provided below:

Legal Transition (May – July 2025)

Trustee skill matrix, JD, and advertising signed off	May
Recruitment for new trustees begins, supported by NCC	May

File signed updated deed to charities register	May
Fundraising Strategy implementation begins	Ongoing
Development of JD and contract for the leadership role	May/June
Interviews for Trustees	June
New Trustees appointed	June

Agency Launch (May 2025 - 30th June 2026)

First meeting of new trust board	June/July
Appointment of new arts development agency Director	TBC
Arts Council Nelson staff and contractors transfer to arts development agency contracts	1 July 2025
ADA Board one year Assessment	1 July 2026

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

A Funding Strategy has been developed to identify opportunities to diversify external revenue streams for the newly developed arts development agency. The direction provided in this strategy is expected to leverage off the significant investment from Nelson City Council, to ensure a robust and sustainable financial foundation to grow the organisation's capacity to support the creative sector in Whakatū.

The strategy also prioritises the development and strengthening of partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders, fostering collaboration to amplify the impact. Guided by the organisation's core vision and values, the approach aims to ensure the agency remains aligned with its mission, while driving innovation and growth within the creative community of Whakatū.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A Communications Plan has been developed to define the core aspects of the Whakatū arts development agency: our vision, brand values, audience insights, promise, and story. It aims to project a clear vision for the future, inspiring individuals to actively engage with Whakatū arts development agency (ADA) supporters.

Nelsonians need to understand *who* the ADA is, and also *why* connecting with and supporting us is meaningful. As a cornerstone of Whakatū Nelson's creative identity, the ADA must exemplify this vision, with every communication and marketing touchpoint carefully aligned to reinforce our role in the arts community.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan, like the organisation that will be created through its implementation, represents a collaborative effort across Arts Council Nelson, Nelson City Council, the wider arts sector, and the wider community. In bringing the arts development agency to life, thanks to the investment of Nelson City Council, it will also be introducing a catalysing effect into the creative sector - uplifting, accelerating, and showcasing the talent and knowledge present in this region. Together we can build success that flows into a stronger local economy, a better quality of life of our artists, and a better, more accessible connection to the arts for all Nelsonians.

We wish to acknowledge the breadth of knowledge that has been drawn into this process, with special thanks to:

- The Arts Council Nelson staff and executive committee
- Nelson City Council
- O'D&Co
- Sophie Kelly and Maria Anderson
- NCC Committee Representatives Rohan O'Neill-Stevens & Matty Anderson
- Anna Dean and Chris Ulutupu
- ParryField Lawyers

And the many hundreds of people in the Whakatū creative sector