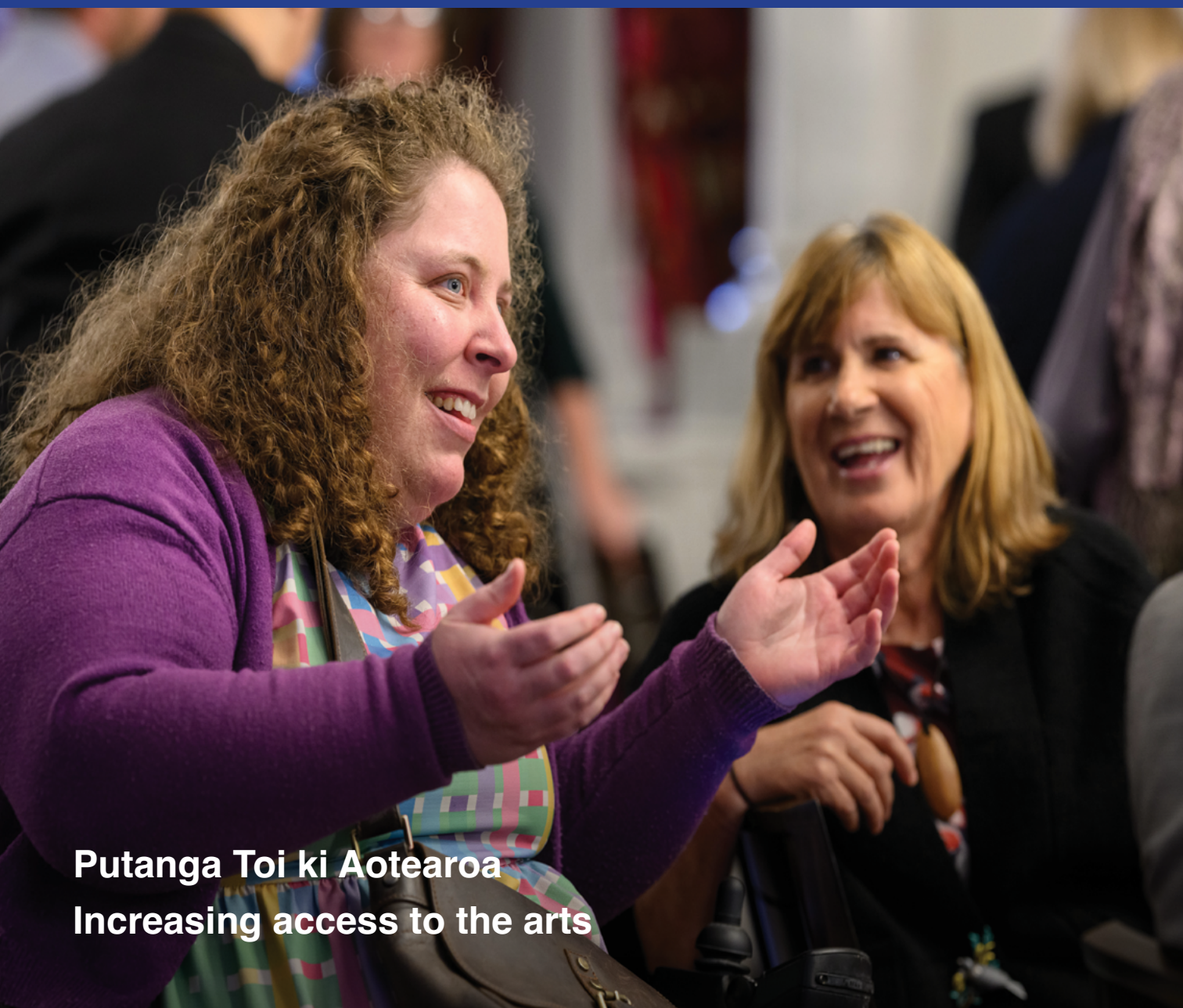


Te hanga i runga
i ngā taonga tuku
iho o te 30 tau

30 arts
access
aotearoa
years of Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa

Building on the
legacy of 30 years

2025



Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa
Increasing access to the arts

Arts Access Aotearoa: a snapshot

Arts Access Aotearoa | Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa works in partnership to increase access to the arts for people in Aotearoa who experience barriers to participation as artists, performers, writers, audience members, and gallery and museum visitors. It does this by working in the disability, mental health and Deaf communities, and through a network of community arts organisations called creative spaces.

Through the Arts For All Network, it supports individuals and organisations committed to making the arts more accessible and inclusive. It also facilitates Taha Hotu Deaf and Disabled Artists Initiative, supporting artists to create work, develop their creative practice and their careers.

It advises Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections on its arts programmes and activities, and advocates for the arts as a tool to support the rehabilitative process of prisoners and their reintegration back into the community on release.

Arts Access Aotearoa is the leading voice advocating for increased access and equity in the arts. It does this by working with government agencies, arts organisations and community groups to drive change.

Vision

All people in Aotearoa can access and participate in the arts.

Purpose

Arts Access Aotearoa works in partnership to increase access to the arts for people in Aotearoa who experience barriers to participation.

Cover: Disabled activist and former Arts Access Aotearoa trustee Erin Gough with Lyn Cotton, Artistic Director of Jolt, at the high tea event in Government House, celebrating 30 years of Arts Access Aotearoa.

Photo: Mark Tantrum Photography

Values

Arts Access Aotearoa provides its service believing in these values:

- Accessibility and inclusion in the arts, respect and kindness in our undertakings for and with all people
- Arts Access Aotearoa recognises the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi to its kaupapa, with due regard for Te Tiriti's articles and principles.

This recognition is reflected in the following values that underpin its work:

- **Mōhiotanga** – seeking understanding and awareness
- **Rangatiratanga** – respecting the mana of others
- **Whanaungatanga** – appreciating the value of relationships and partnerships
- **Kotahitanga** – working in harmony to achieve common purpose and shared vision
- **Kaitiakitanga** – service to others and nurturing leadership within others.



Find out more about Arts Access Aotearoa and its work
artsaccess.org.nz/about

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Large print and online

Arts Access Aotearoa’s “Te hanga i runga i ngā taonga tuku iho o te 30 tau | Building on the legacy of 30 years” and “Te Arotake Performance Review 2025” can be downloaded from artsaccess.org.nz/about-us

Large-print copies of the report are available on request.

Arts Access Aotearoa thanks all its stakeholders, funders and supporters for their contributions to its work in 2025.

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Design: Graphic Solutions Ltd

Te hanga i runga i ngā taonga tuku iho o te 30 tau

Building on the legacy of 30 years

Chair and Executive Director's report on 2025

Arts Access Aotearoa was built on the belief that access to the arts is a basic human right – a belief that's remained steadfast over 30 years. In that time, we have led the national conversation about arts accessibility, equity and inclusion.

In July, we marked Arts Access Aotearoa's 30th anniversary with a celebration high tea at Government House in Wellington, hosted by our Patron, Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand.

This 30-year milestone was an opportunity for the organisation to reflect on what drives this work forward: the communities we work with, our collective advocacy and the daily commitment to making meaningful change.

Access to the arts and creativity is about equity, opportunity, dignity and connection. Over 30 years, we've seen countless examples of the arts transforming lives – in prisons, communities, theatres, museums, libraries and art galleries.

Our focus now is to build on that legacy and ensure every person in Aotearoa has access to the arts as artists, writers, arts practitioners and audience members.

Accessibility and equity in the arts

At Arts Access Aotearoa, everything we do is guided by accessibility and equity in the arts – for Deaf and disabled artists, practitioners and communities; for creative spaces; and for people in correctional facilities.

As a leader in advocating for inclusive, accessible arts policy, processes and investment, Arts Access Aotearoa consulted across central and local government and made nine submissions, including on taxation policy, local authority planning, the Plain Language Act Repeal Bill, arts strategies and the refresh of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

Across this work, we consistently positioned accessibility as essential infrastructure, not as an add-on, and reinforced access to the arts and culture as a human right. Our advocacy work called for systemic change to embed accessibility into funding, policy and planning, and ensure leadership from Deaf and disabled people and those with lived experience of incarceration.

Alongside formal submissions, we engaged decision-makers, sector leaders and communities through briefings, public commentary, presentations and panel discussions.



Dame Cindy Kiro, Richard Bengé and Vic Crockford at Government House celebrating the 30-year anniversary of Arts Access Aotearoa
Photo: Mark Tantrum Photography

For example, Arts Access Aotearoa facilitated or presented on several panels, including at Creative New Zealand's Nui te Kōrero conference and the PANNZ (Performing Arts Network of New Zealand) Arts Market. Here, we shared our message and facilitated spaces for Deaf and disabled artists to express their own advocacy and lived experience to the sector via these major arts sector platforms.

Along with our advocacy mahi, we completed the pilot delivery of our Deaf and disabled-led arts accessibility responsiveness training, made possible through Manatū Taonga's Regeneration Fund. Five arts organisations took part in pilot sessions, with Creative New Zealand the first organisation to receive the training post-pilot. We also delivered a pilot front-of-house accessibility training workshop, to be developed further in 2026.

Our mahi in communities across Aotearoa

From Southland to Northland, Arts Access Aotearoa delivers its strategic goals across four key areas: working with Deaf and disabled artists; supporting individuals, arts and cultural organisations to improve their accessibility; building the sustainability of

OUR IMPACT

2.4%

growth in Facebook followers, reaching 6,703 in 2025, alongside significant gains in reach, content interactions and views.

15.8%

increase in Instagram followers, reaching 3,332 in 2025, supported by consistent engagement and audience interaction

10,350

interactions (estimated) with accessible arts content across digital platforms

creative spaces; and advising Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections on its arts programmes in prisons and Community Corrections.

We work together and across communities, driven by our vision of a society where everyone in Aotearoa can access and participate in the arts. The work includes facilitating professional development opportunities, promoting and advocating for the individuals and communities we work with, and developing resources and research.

You can read more about the highlights of the Taha Hotu Deaf and Disabled Artists Initiative, the Arts For All Network, the Creative Spaces Network and the Arts in Corrections Network (pages 14 to 21).

Funding and finance

Arts Access Aotearoa operates on a mixed-income model designed to support long-term sustainability and national impact. Our work is underpinned by core investment from Creative New Zealand, alongside government contracts, local government funding, grants, philanthropy and emerging income streams.

After 18 years at the helm of Creative New Zealand, Stephen Wainwright stepped down from his role in April and Gretchen La Roche became its Chief Executive Officer. Thank you, Stephen, for your ongoing support and recognition of our work.

In 2025, we continued to strengthen and diversify our funding base. Our long-standing partnership with Ara Poutama Aotearoa remains central to our Arts in Corrections programme. Funding support from Foundation North, Auckland Council, Wellington City Council and other trusts enables delivery across our programmes.

We progressed our fundraising strategy with a focus on building long-term relationships, expanding our grants portfolio, and establishing

structured approaches to individual giving and donor engagement. At the same time, we began developing earned income opportunities such as accessibility training and sector development services that align with our kaupapa and expertise.

This focus on our long-term sustainability and growth has resulted in a deficit at the end of our financial year for the first time in 13 years. This is a strategic, short-term measure to achieve our long-term goals.

Thanks to staff and board

This year has been a year of moments, milestones and mahi. Whether it was small wins in accessibility, enhanced profile for Deaf and disabled artists, joyful connections in creative spaces or evidence about the transformative power of arts programmes in prisons, Arts Access Aotearoa is grateful to the people and partners we work with who make change possible.

A heartfelt thanks to Arts Access Aotearoa staff, who continue to demonstrate whakawhanaungatanga, commitment and adaptability as they work to improve accessibility and equity in the arts.

As a Tiriti partner organisation, Arts Access Aotearoa continued to deepen its understanding and knowledge of te ao Māori. We were extremely grateful for the generosity and support of our Kaumātua, Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp.

Our thanks to the board of trustees for the commitment and skills they bring to the organisation. In particular, we thank Paige Sullivan, who retired from the board this year. And a warm welcome to our new trustee, Robyn Scott.

As the year ended, we've reflected on the legacy of our first 30 years and look forward with strategic purpose to continue providing equitable, accessible and inclusive arts for everyone in Aotearoa.



Victoria Crockford
Trust Chair Toihau
16 May 2026



Richard Bengé MNZM
Executive Director Kaiwhakahaere Matua
16 May 2026



Richard Benge, Merrill Holdsworth and Caleb Gordon at the IHC Art Awards 2025



Katie Querin in a panel discussion about accessibility with Phil Conroy and Maldwyn Greenwood at the Entertainment Technology New Zealand Conference



Richard Benge and Stephen Wainwright at Stephen's farewell from Creative New Zealand

Our people in 2025

Kaumātua

Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp

(Ngāti Ruapani, Ngāti Porou, Rongowhakaata, Kahungunu, English descent)

Patron

Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro,

GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Kahu and British descent)

Trustees

Victoria Crockford – Chair from August 2024, joined board in February 2023

Jo Burrell – joined board in May 2021

Hone Fletcher – joined board in November 2024

Rebecca McDonald PLY – joined board in April 2023

Robyn Scott – joined board in August 2025

Dr Samuele Paolo De Stefani – joined board in August 2024

Paige Sullivan – joined board as a trustee in February 2022, retired in July 2025

Staff

Richard Benge MNZM, Executive Director Kaiwhakahaere Matua

Dawa Devereux, Business Administrator Kaipakihi

Airini Gordon, Administration and Projects Assistant Kaiawhina Whakahaere a Mahi

Caleb Gordon, Fundraising and Projects Coordinator Kairukuruku Kaupapa Kohi Putea

Jazz Lolesio, Arts Access Activator Auckland Whakahohe a Toi Putanga ki Tāmaki Makaurau

Sophie Macdonald, Communications Advisor Kaiwhakahaere Whakawhitiwhiti Kōrero

Iona McNaughton, Communications Advisor Kaiwhakahaere Whakawhitiwhiti Kōrero

Katie Querin, Arts For All Activator Whakahohe a Toi Ōritetanga

Stace Robertson, Lead Accessibility Advisor Kaiārahi a Toi Ōritetanga

Fiona Sharp, Creative Spaces Network Development Advisor Kaitohutuhu Whanaketanga Kaupapa Toi

Dev Singh, Finance Manager Kaiwhakahaere Putea

Conor Twyford, Policy Principal Kaiārahi Kaupapa

Neil Wallace, Arts In Corrections Advisor Kaiārahi a Toi Ara Poutama

Renee Warwood, Digital Network Connector Tūhono Whatunga Mamati

Volunteers

Thanks to volunteers Rajeev Mishra, Vivecca Chatila and Eva Ruiz who did so much to support Arts Access Aotearoa and its work in 2025.



Dev Singh and Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp at the Government House celebrations



Katie Querin, Caleb Gordon and Stace Robertson at the IHC Art Awards 2025



Deborah Phillips and Neil Wallace at an Arts in Corrections hui at Hawke's Bay Regional Prison



Hone Fletcher, Dawa Devereux and Dame Cindy Kiro at the Government House celebrations



Jazz Lolesio and Kim Boyd, Estuary Arts Centre in Orewa



Fiona Sharp and Cass Hendry, Arts for Health in Hamilton



Vic Crockford, Chair, Arts Access Aotearoa

Celebrating 30 years of impact

Since 1995, Arts Access Aotearoa has been leading the way in driving access to the arts across Aotearoa New Zealand. We marked our 30th anniversary with a celebration high tea at Government House in Wellington, hosted by our Patron, Dame Cindy Kiro.

Working alongside diverse communities, Arts Access Aotearoa:

- pioneered the concept of “creative spaces”
- partnered with Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections in 2004 to bring high-quality arts programmes into prisons
- launched the Arts For All Network in 2010
- established the Taha Hotu Deaf and Disabled Artists Initiative in 2025.

You can read about this work in the following pages.

“Arts Access Aotearoa is the country’s most outspoken advocate on removing barriers of participation for creative endeavours.”

- This comment was included in an article by The Big Idea on its website

Photos: Mark Tantrum Photography



Arts Access Aotearoa staff and former staff at Government House



Theresa Cooper and Dave Armstrong



Grant David and Prue Oxley



Arts Access Aotearoa trustees and former trustees at Government House

Moments and milestones: 1995 – 2025



2002: Penny Eames, founding Executive Director, with trustees Jimmy Wallace, Nick Judson, Sue Bagshaw, Christopher Finlayson (Chair), Sai Lealea and Neil Sinclair



2010: Marianne Taylor, Executive Director, Arts Access Aotearoa, with Des Ripi, Department of Corrections, and Robyn Hughes, recipient of the inaugural Big 'A' Prison Arts Leadership Award 2010



2003: Painted shoes by creative space artists displayed on the Parliament steps



2011: Former trustees Kendall Akhurst and Stew Sexton, and Kirsten Kelly, Wellington City Council, at an Arts For All Wellington Network forum discussion



2007: Daniel Phillips and Prime Minister Helen Clark at the opening of a creative spaces exhibition in Bowen Gallery, Wellington



2014: Participants in the first audio describer workshop, facilitated by Arts Access Aotearoa



2014: Iona McNaughton, Claire Noble, Gemma Williamson, Jacqui Moyes and Richard Benge in front of posters developed by Arts Access Aotearoa for its national I'm An Artist campaign



2018: Arts Access Aotearoa Kaumātua the late Bill Kaua and Founding Patron the late Mel Smith at Te Putanga Toi Arts Access Awards



2015: Labour's arts spokesperson Jacinda Arden presents the Artistic Achievement Award to musician Pati Umaga



2024: Delegates at Ngā Wāhi Auaha Creative Spaces Conference



2015: Arts Access Aotearoa Chair Richard Cunliffe and Executive Director Richard Benge cut the cake at a twentieth anniversary lunch, with Dame Rosie Horton, former Executive Director Penny Eames and former trustee Neil Sinclair



2024: Richard Benge, Vic Crockford, Hon Paul Goldsmith and Kaumātua Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp at Ngā Wāhi Auaha Creative Spaces Conference



Rodney Bell, Jodee Mundy and Stace Robertson in a disability arts panel discussion at PANNZ 2025

Taha Hotu: opening its digital doors



This was a big year for Taha Hotu Deaf and Disabled Artists Initiative. It was a year of building, connecting and nourishing the kaupapa through our growing community of artists. We began with a soft launch of the resources, accessible formats and the website mid-year, opening its digital doors for the first time.

The first Taha Hotu networking hui was held in August at the D* List, bringing together Tāmaki Makaurau's Deaf and disabled artists and practitioners.

And in early December, we hosted an invite-only celebration at the Creative New Zealand office in Te Whanganui-a-Tara to thank the Deaf and disabled artists, community members and advisors who helped to shape Taha Hotu. This was an opportunity to recognise the years of conversation, advocacy and lived experience that sit behind the initiative.

The website features stories, blogs and profiles of Deaf or disabled artists, and a range of resources in various formats, including NZSL videos and Easy Read documents.

Every year People First NZ's National Committee presents the Make it Easy Award to an organisation it believes has demonstrated a commitment to making its information accessible in Easy Read. We were honoured to receive the 2025 Make it Easy Award for the Taha Hotu resources.

Kim Anderson, an Auckland graphic designer and illustrator who designed the logo for Taha Hotu, was the recipient of this year's \$10,000 Whakahoā Kaitoi Whanaketanga Creative New Zealand Deaf and Disabled Artists Fellowship, presented by Arts Access Aotearoa.

OUR IMPACT

12

resources in accessible formats on the Taha Hotu website

31

stories and profiles on the Taha Hotu website



Find out more about Taha Hotu
artsaccess.org.nz/taha-hotu



Erin Donohue and Henrietta Bollinger at a Crip the Lit event

 **FEATURED**

A love letter to Crip the Lit

“I’ve stepped outside of my little writing bubble and made my words alive. I have written things unimaginable before the direction Crip the Lit has offered. I’ve become a more confident writer and person,” blogged Erin Donohue in November 2025.

“I am buoyed by this community. And I’m endlessly grateful for what Trish and Robyn gifted me when they asked me to be part of an event in 2021. My life would be much smaller without it.”

[Read Erin’s blog](#)



Members of the Arts For All Hawke's Bay Network hui

Arts For All Network: small changes, big impact

The Arts For All Network, facilitated by Arts Access Aotearoa, is the largest disabled-led arts accessibility network in Aotearoa with more than 1000 members by the end of 2025. Along with increased membership, the number of accessible events and services leapt from 220 to 366.

In early 2025, Arts Access Aotearoa surveyed Network members, asking them about their accessibility work and progress over the previous year. The findings were published in "The Arts For All Network Report 2025", which was shared with Network members and made available online.

Although some members received funding to make big shifts in accessibility, survey responses showed most members were wanting advice on making small, actionable improvements that didn't require extra budget, staff or specialised support.

As a result, the Network theme for 2025 was "small changes over time can have a big impact", and many Network members proved that access can be a priority even without a big budget or a sizable team.

From small grassroots organisations to the big players, magic was made all year as small accessibility wins built into major milestones.

In the 2024 Annual Report, we acknowledged the ill health of Tim Bray QSM and the closure of Auckland's Tim Bray Theatre Company, which he founded in 1991. Tim passed away in 2025 and Arts Access Aotearoa was pleased to honour his legacy by making some of the theatre's accessibility resources available on our website.

OUR IMPACT

16

in-person and online
Arts For All Network
meetings facilitated

1100

individuals and
organisations are
members of the national
Arts For All Network

366

accessible services
at arts and cultural
events recorded

167

individual advisory
sessions delivered
to individuals and
organisations



Find out more about the Arts For All Network
artsaccess.org.nz/arts-for-all-network



The closing set of the Twominds Festival 2025 held in Canterbury Photo: Lucas Perelini

* FEATURED

Music festival embraces accessibility

Twominds Festival, held in Ōtautahi Christchurch, has grown from humble backyard gatherings to a five-stage, boutique music festival with a commitment to accessibility. It aims to ensure that live music is for everyone, says Charlie Corkery, its Access Manager.

“We’re proving that accessibility isn’t just for big-budget events. It’s about a willingness to adapt and widen your definition of inclusivity. If a small festival like ours can do it, so can the rest of the industry.”

[Read about the Twominds Festival](#)



A keynote address by Dr Molly Mullen at the Shifting the Stream forum in Auckland



Toi Ora Director Susanne Ritzenhoff, right, with Toi Ora artists Scott San Quentin and Ella Costello at the Shifting the Stream forum

Shifting the Stream for creative spaces

The highlight of this year was a forum in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland that brought together creative spaces, funders and policymakers to reimagine more equitable, outcomes-focused funding models.

With the support of Auckland Council's Community Innovation funding, Arts Access Aotearoa explored new, collaborative ways to strengthen the Creative Spaces Network. This included Shifting the Stream: Rethinking arts investment, a forum focused on moving beyond short-term project funding towards longer-term sustainable funding and collective impact.

A keynote address from Dr Molly Mullen of the University of Auckland introduced "Both + And Thinking", challenging traditional either/or approaches and offering a framework for integrated investment across arts, health and wellbeing.

Putting funders, practitioners and creative space leaders around the table created a positive, solutions-focused atmosphere.

In response, the Network identified the need for shared wellbeing indicators, resulting in a collaboration with Dr Rosie Gallen and the Tūhono Impact, an online tool to help community organisations measure and develop their impact.

Other practical tools and resources have since been developed and distributed to support consistent, values-led measurement across the Network.

Arts Access Aotearoa is extending this successful model and delivering *Shifting the Stream* in Ōtautahi Christchurch in 2026, supported by Christchurch City

Council. This will help ensure continued momentum towards a more connected and sustainable creative spaces sector.

OUR IMPACT

62

creative spaces delivering activity across 90+ locations

44%

of creative space artists experience isolation

24

creative spaces delivering activity in the Auckland region

39%

of creative space artists experience mental distress

87%

of creative spaces collaborate with other organisations

27%

of creative space artists are vulnerable youth

52%

of creative space artists have a learning disability



Ngā wāhi auaha
Creative spaces
igniting possibilities



Find out more about the Creative Spaces Network
creativespacesnetwork.org.nz



Vincents Art Workshop celebrates its 40th anniversary Photo: Hagen Hopkins

* FEATURED

Vincents Art Workshop marks 40 years

Vincents Art Workshop, the longest-running creative space in New Zealand, celebrated its 40th anniversary with an exhibition honouring four decades of inclusive, community-based arts practice at the Tākina Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre in August 2025.

Andrew Mitchell, its Kaiwhakahaere Coordinator, is excited and optimistic about Vincents' future. "We're deeply rooted in the community. Over the next 10 years, we hope to not only maintain that connection but continue to grow our impact and reach."

[Read about Vincents Art Workshop](#)



Participants at an Arts in Corrections Canterbury Network hui in December



Neil Wallace and a Corrections staff member at the Hawke's Bay Regional Prison

Researching benefits of the arts in prisons

A significant milestone this year was the release of the evaluation of the Creative Arts and Cultural Wellbeing Prison Initiative. The three-year study examined 14 programmes delivered across 17 prison sites, reaching more than 1000 people in prison.

The findings were affirming. Most participants said the programmes supported their wellbeing, confidence, relationships and emotional regulation. Importantly, more than 90 per cent said their involvement encouraged them to consider taking part in other education and rehabilitation programmes.

This evidence matters. It provides Aotearoa-based confirmation that the arts play a real and practical role in supporting people to reconnect with themselves and with others, and learn new skills.

It also highlights the strength of culturally grounded programmes, particularly those shaped by kaupapa Māori and Pacific approaches, where identity, belonging and pride sit at the centre of the work.

Alongside this, new research got under way in 2025 through the University of Otago Research Grant project called "Arts Behind Bars: Māori men's experiences of participating in arts in prison".

In February 2025, Arts Access Aotearoa published its groundbreaking guide for Arts in Corrections educators, called "Te Ara ki Runga The Path Up".

Developed alongside the Arts in Corrections sector, it's strengthening arts delivery in prisons and guiding safer, culturally grounded practice across sites.

The guide was also the foundation of a course for Arts in Corrections educators, delivered to 22 students over 2025.

OUR IMPACT

611

advisory engagements with the Arts in Corrections sector

6

founding members of Te Rā Lived Experience Ropu

23

stories, articles and blogs promoting benefits of arts programmes in prison



Find out more about the Arts and Justice Network
artsaccess.org.nz/arts-and-justice



Gilli Marshall, Educational Art Tutor at Hawke's Bay Regional Prison, with raranga artist Deborah Phillips, who spoke at an Arts Inc Hastings event in November 2025

* FEATURED

“Profound ability of toi Māori to create change”

“My life is testament to the profound ability of toi Māori to create change in a person’s life,” says Deborah Phillips. “Weaving has taught me perseverance, self-reliance, problem-solving and confidence. It enabled a connection to tikanga, wairua and aroha, which instilled identity and pride in me. I slowly became what I was always meant to be – a Māori woman.”

Deborah is a member of Te Rā Lived Experience Advisory Ropu, set up by Arts Access Aotearoa. “It’s an enlightened concept to have people who have done time in prison providing insights and teaching the artform that helped us rise above it all; to heal and thrive. Acting as role models, projecting hope.”

[Read Deborah’s blog](#)

Funders and sponsors

Arts Access Aotearoa thanks the following organisations that have supported its work in increasing access to the arts in 2025. It looks forward to your ongoing support.

Core funder

Major contracts



Local government grants



Grants



Legal services

Strategic partner



Supporters

Thank you to the generous Friends of Arts Access Aotearoa whose regular donations supported the activities in this report. Thanks also to Rajeev Mishra, Keith Moss, Dr Molly Mullen, Dr Rosie Gallen, Powerdigm, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, Foundation North, The White Room Creative Space, Pātaka, PANNZ, Te Matatiki Toi Ora The Arts Centre, EVANZ, Te Papa Tongarewa, Creative Taranaki, Auckland Theatre Company, Arts Inc, Creative Waikato, Hawke's Bay Regional Prison, Auckland South Prison.

Thanks also to our business supporters Craig Christensen and Graphic Solutions; Marty Brooky and Coherent; Ben Courtney and Base IT; and Volunteer Wellington.



Find out more about Arts Access Aotearoa's funders and supporters
artsaccess.org.nz/Funders

Build the next 30 years with us



Rangatahi during rehearsals for Manawa Ora, a devised theatre programme at Ngā Rangatahi Toa in Auckland Photo: Emily Raftery

In 2025, Arts Access Aotearoa marked 30 years of championing access to the arts across Aotearoa New Zealand. In that time, we have worked alongside Deaf and disabled artists, creative spaces, arts organisations and communities to remove barriers and open up the arts as a place where everyone can create, participate and belong.

That work has never been more vital – or more possible.

Over the past year, we've seen what can happen when access is prioritised: artists leading on their own terms, communities strengthened through creativity, and partnerships reshaping how the arts sector thinks about equity and inclusion.

This is the legacy of the past 30 years. It's also the foundation of what comes next.

As we look to the future, we invite you to be part of it.

To build on this momentum, Arts Access Aotearoa needs a community of people who believe in the power of the arts to transform lives and are ready to stand alongside our work.

We invite you to become a regular donor and join a growing movement of supporters wanting a more accessible, inclusive arts sector and compassionate society.

Regular giving provides stability. It allows us to plan ahead, invest in long-term change and continue advocating for an arts sector where access is expected – not an afterthought.



Help us shape the next 30 years of accessible arts in Aotearoa.
04 802 4349 | artsaccess.org.nz/support-us



"The tide is high but I am still holding on" by Dali Susanto, when he was in Hawke's Bay Regional Prison and studied art in classes led by Educational Art Tutor Gilli Marshall. An experienced high school teacher and visual artist, Gilli is the only full-time arts teacher working in a New Zealand prison. Read [Art a part of daily life in Hawke's Bay prison](#)

Te Arotake

30 arts
access
aotearoa
years of Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa

**Performance
Review 2025**



**Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa
Increasing access to the arts**

Entity information

For the year ended 31 December 2025

Legal name of entity: Arts Access Aotearoa
Whakahauhou Katoa o Hanga Charitable Trust

Other name of entity (if any): Arts Access
Aotearoa Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa

Type of entity and legal basis (if any):
Charitable trust

Registration number: CC 33533

Registration date: 30 June 2008

Entity's purpose or mission: All people in
New Zealand can access and participate in the arts

Entity structure: Trust governed by
Board of Trustees

**Main sources of the entity's cash and
resources:** Grants, fundraising and donations

**Main methods used by the entity to raise
funds:** Application for grants from government,
local bodies, charities and gaming organisations

**Entity's reliance on volunteers and donated
goods or services:** Significant level of volunteers



Cultural Conversations, a creative space in Nelson for people from Nelson's former refugee and migrant communities

Cover: Robyn Hunt ONZM, KSO, Arts Access Accolade 2019 recipient, speaking at the Government House event celebrating 30 years of Arts Access Aotearoa

Statement of service performance

For the year ended 31 December 2025

Description of medium to long term objectives

Arts Access Aotearoa works to achieve the following outcomes:

- Arts organisations, companies, artists, producers and venues are accessible and inclusive.
- Community-based creative spaces have the capacity and sustainability to deliver quality arts programmes for people with limited access.
- There is increased awareness among funders and policy makers about the value of the arts in building strong communities and enhancing people's health and wellbeing.
- There is increased public awareness of and advocacy for access to the arts for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Arts and cultural practices support wellbeing, rehabilitation and reintegration for people affected by the justice system

Description of significant activities

	Quantity	
	Current year	Last year
Arts For All programme: engagements with arts organisations and individuals to improve accessibility and inclusion in the arts sector	687 engagements	N/A*
Arts For All, Creative Spaces, Arts in Corrections and Taha Hotu Network hui and sector meetings delivered	21 events	15 events
Advocacy submissions and formal engagements supporting improved accessibility policy and funding systems	6 engagements	1 engagement
Accessible arts and cultural events, services and opportunities promoted through Arts Access Aotearoa channels	366 opportunities	220 opportunities
Arts and cultural engagements supported in justice settings through Arts Access Aotearoa partnerships	611 engagements	N/A*
Capability-building resources and professional development activities delivered through the Creative Spaces Network	6 outputs	N/A*

* 2025 was the first year these measures were formally collected and reported using a consistent methodology

Statement of financial performance

For the year ended 31 December 2025

		Actual This year	Actual Last year
		\$	\$
Revenue			
Government service delivery grants and contracts	1	903,880	2,036,996
Donations, fundraising and other similar revenue	1	196,127	168,974
Interest, dividends and other similar revenue	1	29,996	69,793
Other revenue	1	39,744	10,992
Total revenue		1,169,746	2,286,755
Expenses			
Expenses related to public fundraising	2	36,508	54,566
Employee remuneration and related expenses	2	787,033	693,883
Volunteer-related expenses	2	9,468	31,318
Expenses related to service delivery	2	379,935	1,433,468
Other expenses	2	32,896	26,174
Total expenses		1,245,840	2,239,409
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		(76,094)	47,346



The first Taha Hotu hui, bringing together Deaf and disabled artists and practitioners in Tāmaki Makaurau

Statement of financial position

As at 31 December 2025

	Note	Actual This year \$	Actual Last year \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Bank accounts and cash	3	726,651	689,478
Debtors and prepayments	3	5,750	63,250
Total current assets		732,401	752,728
Non-current assets			
Investments	3	22,055	177,187
Property, plant and equipment	4	39,953	48,209
Total non-current assets		62,009	225,396
Total assets		794,409	978,124
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Bank overdraft	3	2,848	1,909
Creditors and accrued expenses	3	12,400	35,520
Employee costs payable	3	49,989	65,849
Deferred revenue	3	142,460	212,040
Total current liabilities		207,697	315,318
Non-current liabilities		-	-
Total non-current liabilities		-	-
Total liabilities		207,697	315,318
Total assets less total liabilities (net assets)		586,712	662,806
Accumulated funds			
Trustee/member accumulated equity	5	473,898	549,992
Investment reserve	5	12,814	12,814
Restricted/Discretionary reserve funds	5	100,000	100,000
Total accumulated funds		586,712	662,806

Adopted as true and correct by the governance board on 16 May 2026



Victoria Crockford

Trust Chair Toihau, 16 May 2026



Richard Bengé MNZM

Executive Director Kaiwhakahaere Matua, 16 May 2026

The notes, accounting policies and assurance reporting are integral to these financial statements.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	Actual This year \$	Actual Last year \$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash was received from:		
Donations, fundraising and other similar receipts	424	3,286
Funding from central or local government	881,139	1,605,579
Receipts from non-governmental sources for providing goods or services	171,228	95,629
Interest, dividends and other investment receipts	31,849	81,609
Fundraising revenue	695	31,192
Other revenue	39,743	11,292
Net GST	64,400	9,237
Cash was applied to:		
Payments to suppliers and employees	1,305,465	2,845,073
Net cash flows from operating activities	(115,987)	(1,007,249)
Cash was applied to:		
Payments to acquire property, plant and equipment	1,642	75
Net cash flows from investing and financing activities	(1,642)	(75)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(117,629)	(1,007,324)
Opening bank and Mastercard balance	853,797	1,861,121
Closing bank and Mastercard balance	736,168	853,797
This is represented by:		
Bank accounts and Mastercard account	736,168	853,797

The notes, accounting policies and assurance reporting are integral to these financial statements.

Statement of accounting policies

For the year ended 31 December 2025

Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared for Arts Access Aotearoa. The performance report is prepared in accordance with the XRB's Tier 3 (NFP) standard. The entity is eligible to apply these requirements as it does not have public accountability and has total annual expenses of less than \$5,000,000. All transactions in the Performance Report are reported using the accrual basis of accounting. The Performance Report is prepared under the assumption that the entity will continue to operate in the foreseeable future.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

The entity is registered for GST. All amounts are recorded exclusive of GST, except for Debtors and Creditors, which are stated inclusive of GST.

Income tax

Arts Access Aotearoa is wholly exempt from New Zealand income tax, having fully complied with all statutory conditions for these exemptions.

Bank accounts and cash

Bank accounts and cash in the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flows comprise cash balances and bank balances (including short term deposits) with original maturities of 90 days or less.

Changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes in accounting policies during the financial year (last year - nil)

Fixed assets

Fixed assets, other than land, are recorded at cost less accumulated depreciation.

Depreciation

Depreciation has been calculated on a straight line basis over the estimated useful life of the assets.

Accounts receivable

Accounts receivable are initially measured at the amount owed. When it is likely that the amount owed, or some portion, will not be collected, an impairment adjustment is recorded. Interest charged on overdue amount is added to the individual debtor balance.

Investments

Investments comprise of all fixed term deposits and accrued interest on those deposits that are invested for longer than 12 months period.

Accounts payable

Accounts payable (creditors) are recorded at the amount of cash needed to settle the liabilities. The amounts are unsecured and usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Revenue recognition

Income is recognised when invoiced or receipted except where income is received in advance. Income in Advance is stated as a deferred revenue under current liability where the funds have not yet been expended, according to the authorised purpose, and those funds would be required to be repaid to the funder.

Income tax exemption

Section CW41 & 42 of the Income Tax Act 2007 exempt income tax, on an organisation registered with the Charities Commission, and applying income to its charitable purposes. The Trust has Income Tax Exemption and Charitable status through its registration with the Charities Commission on the 30 June 2008. [CC 33533]

Comparative figures

The entity has adopted the new Tier 3 (NFP) standards and this Performance Report has been completed pursuant to the standards. Few minor changes have been made from the previous year's financial report in the groupings of items. The new groupings have not impacted on the net surplus or the total equity that was reported in the previous year's report.

Notes to the performance report

For the year ended 31 December 2025

Note 1 : Analysis of revenue

		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Revenue item	Analysis	\$	\$
Government service delivery	Creative New Zealand – core	503,658	493,782
grants and contracts	Department of Corrections	200,000	200,000
	Wellington City Council	37,014	29,528
	Ministry for Culture and Heritage	17,517	210,208
	Ministry for Culture and Heritage – PD Fund	-	457,576
	Ministry of Social Development	-	39,529
	Ministry for Culture and Heritage – Regeneration Fund	113,539	492,109
	Oranga Tamariki	-	68,593
	Auckland Council	32,152	45,671
	Total	903,880	2,036,996
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Revenue item	Analysis	\$	\$
Donations, fundraising and other similar revenue	Foundation North	157,228	88,130
	Thomas George Macarthy Trust	7,500	2,500
	Home Ground project	-	300
	National Foundation of the Deaf	1,500	-
	Copyright Licensing NZ	5,000	-
	Other donations	1,120	4,478
	Internet NZ	-	5,000
	Sponsorships, fellowships	-	35,000
	In-kind donations of goods and services	23,779	33,566
	Total	196,127	168,974
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Revenue Item	Analysis	\$	\$
Interest, dividends and other similar revenue		29,996	69,793
	Total	29,996	69,793
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Revenue Item	Analysis	\$	\$
Other revenue	Other	39,744	10,992
	Total	39,744	10,992

The notes, accounting policies and assurance reporting are integral to these financial statements.

Note 2: Analysis of expenses

		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Expense item	Analysis	\$	\$
Expenses related to public fundraising	Travel	582	37
	Marketing and promotions	5,827	7,240
	Fundraising and sponsorship	12,146	6,355
	Fellowships programme	17,953	40,934
	Total	36,508	54,566
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Expense item	Analysis	\$	\$
Employee remuneration and related expenses	Salaries and wages	745,661	651,350
	Professional development	4,859	6,480
	KiwiSaver contributions	30,794	30,306
	ACC levies	2,136	1,803
	Health and safety	2,289	1,600
	Payroll fees	1,294	1,386
	Recruitment	-	958
	Total	787,033	693,883
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Expense item	Analysis	\$	\$
Volunteer related expenses	Volunteer programme	9,468	31,318
	Total	9,468	31,318
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Expense item	Analysis	\$	\$
Expenses related to service delivery	Administration and overhead costs	31,034	27,128
	Deaf and Disabled Artists Network	9,880	7,508
	Projects	278,173	1,337,286
	Trustees' expenses	14,033	14,621
	Premises	46,815	46,925
	Total	379,935	1,433,468
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Expense item	Analysis	\$	\$
Other expenses	General expenses	17,149	10,297
	Depreciation	9,897	11,389
	Legal	-	788
	Audit	5,850	3,700
	Total	32,896	26,174

Note 3: Analysis of assets and liabilities

		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Asset item	Analysis	\$	\$
Bank accounts and short-term deposits	Current account	45,447	202,160
	Saver account	3,568	3,546
	Petty cash	585	-
	Short-term deposits	677,051	483,772
	Total	726,651	689,478
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Asset item	Analysis	\$	\$
Debtors and prepayments	Debtors	5,750	63,250
	Total	5,750	63,250
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Investment item	Analysis	\$	\$
Term Deposits over 12 months	Westpac term deposits	2,055	177,187
	Total	22,055	177,187
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Liability item	Analysis	\$	\$
Bank overdraft	Westpac Mastercard	2,848	1,909
	Total	2,848	1,909
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Liability item	Analysis	\$	\$
Creditors and accrued expenses	Accounts payable	2,279	7,215
	Audit fees accrual	4,500	3,600
	GST due	5,626	24,705
	Total	12,405	35,520
		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Liability item	Analysis	\$	\$
Employee costs payable	MD salary allowance accrued	-	10,000
	Leave balance accrued	49,989	55,849
	Total	49,989	65,849

		Actual This year	Actual Last year
Liability item	Analysis	\$	\$
Deferred revenue	Wellington City Council	21,228	15,787
	Foundation North	57,143	14,371
	Mātātuhi Foundation	5,500	-
	Creative spaces revenue	-	17,517
	Auckland Council	12,505	12,501
	Department of Corrections – Revenue in advance	10,000	10,000
	Ministry for Culture and Heritage – Regeneration Project	-	113,539
	Auckland Council Innovation Fund grant	17,844	-
	Sub total	124,220	183,715
Funds held in trust			
	Crip the Lit funds	94	134
	Winton and Margaret Bear Trust	3,770	3,770
	Audio description bond	530	400
	Equal Voices Arts	13,846	24,021
	Sub total	18,240	8,325
	Total	142,460	212,040



Members of the Arts For All Otago Network at a hui in Dunedin in 2025, facilitated by Arts Access Aotearoa

Note 4 : Fixed Assets

This year

Asset class	Opening carrying amount	Purchases/Reclassification	Sales/Disposal/Reclassification	Current year depreciation and impairment	Closing carrying amount
Furniture and fixtures	2,428			1,308	1,120
Computers (including software)	7,270	367	-	6,499	1,138
Database project	38,511	1,275	-	2,091	37,695
Total	48,209	1,642	-	9,897	39,953

Last year

Asset class	Opening carrying amount	Purchases	Sales/Disposals	Current year depreciation and impairment	Closing carrying amount
Furniture and fixtures	3,752	-		1,324	2,428
Office equipment	2,877		2,877		-
Computers (including software)	12,431	2877	-	8,038	7,270
Database project	40,538	-		2,027	38,511
Total	59,598	2,877	2,877	11,389	48,209

Note 5: Accumulated Funds

This year

Description	Accumulated surpluses or deficits	Investment reserve	Equity funds Reserves - restricted/ discretionary	Total
Opening balance	549,992	12,814	100,000	662,806
Surplus/(deficit) for the year from operations	(76,094)			(76,094)
Closing balance	473,898	12,814	100,000	586,712

Last year

Description	Accumulated surpluses or deficits	Investment reserve	Equity funds Reserves - restricted/ discretionary	Total
Opening balance	502,646	12,814	100,000	615,460
Surplus/(deficit) for the year from operations	47,346			47,346
Closing balance	549,992	12,814	100,000	662,806

Note 6: Commitments and contingencies

Commitment	Explanation and timing	At balance date	At balance date
		This year	Last year
		\$	\$
Commitments to lease or rent assets	Arts Access Aotearoa has a monthly lease on the premises at 63 Abel Smith Street from which it operates. Rent is paid monthly, two weeks in advance and two weeks in arrears. Minimum three months' notice is required for termination of the lease	9,474	9,474

Other than the commitments noted above, there are no commitments as at balance date (Last Year - nil)

Contingent liabilities and guarantees

There are no contingent liabilities or guarantees as at balance date (Last Year - nil)

The notes, accounting policies and assurance reporting are integral to these financial statements.



Neil Wallace, Arts Access Aotearoa, George Massingham, Ara Poutama Aotearoa, and Karen Teddy, Volunteer Coordinator at Hawke's Bay Regional Prison at an Arts Inc Hastings event to promote high-quality arts programmes as a valuable rehabilitative tool

Note 7: Other

Unused donations and grants with conditions

Description.	Original amount	Not fulfilled amount	Purpose and nature of the condition(s)
Ministry for Culture and Heritage: Regeneration Project	674,740	-	Developing an arts sector specific Deaf and disability responsiveness training; support Deaf and disabled artists in pursuing a sustainable career; increase access and participation by supporting the development of accessibility; supporting arts practitioners delivering in correctional settings
Wellington City Council	42,455	21,228	Support creative spaces in Wellington City and advocate for greater access to the arts in Wellington. In partnership with City Arts, provide workshops, training and support to the Arts For All Network
Foundation North	200,000	57,143	Funds received for Empowering Auckland Creative Spaces project yet to be used
Auckland Council	25,000	12,505	Funds received from Auckland Council for Auckland creative services project
Department of Corrections	200,000	10,000	Funds received from Department of Corrections for the Arts in Corrections programme
Mātātuhi Foundation	5,500	5,500	Funds received for Mātātuhi Foundation for specific purpose yet to be used
Auckland Council Innovation Fund Grant	25,000	17,844	Funds received from Auckland Council for Innovation project

Funds held in trust

Description	Original amount	Unfilled amount	Derivation of the fund
Winton and Margaret Bear Trust	8,280	3,770	Funding for Winton and Margaret Bear Trust scholarships granted
Equal Voices Arts	210,352	13,846	Funds held on behalf of Equal Voices Arts

Note 8: Goods or services provided to the entity in-kind

Description	Amount
Time donated by volunteers	9,029
Goods and services donated by individuals and organisations	18,850

Note 9: Related party disclosures

There are no transactions involving related parties during the financial year (Last year - Nil)

Note 10: Events after the balance date:

There were no events that have occurred after the balance date that would have a material impact on the Performance Report (Last year - Nil)

Note 11: Ability to continue operating

The governance have considered the going-concern principle and believe to the best of its knowledge that the organisation has resources to continue operating for the foreseeable future



Jazz Lolesio and Fiona Sharp, Arts Access Aotearoa at an exhibition opening at Estuary Arts Centre in Orewa, Auckland



Neil Wallace, left, with Arts in Corrections Northern Network members at a hui in Kohuora South Auckland Corrections Facility, where eight members were presented Arts in Corrections award certificates for their outstanding contribution

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To TRUSTEES of ARTS ACCESS AOTEAROA WHAKAHAUHAU KATOA O HANGA CHARITABLE TRUST

Report on the Performance Report

Opinion

We have audited the performance report of ARTS ACCESS AOTEAROA WHAKAHAUHAU KATOA O HANGA CHARITABLE TRUST (the "TRUST"), which comprise the financial statements on pages 4 to 14, and the service performance information on page 3 and the entity information on page 2. The complete set of financial statements comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2025, the statement of financial performance and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, the accompanying performance report presents fairly, in all material respects:

- The entity information as at 31 December 2025;
- the financial position of the TRUST as at 31 December 2025 and of its financial performance, and its cash flows for the year then ended; and
- the service performance for the year ended 31 December 2025 in that the service performance information is appropriate and meaningful in accordance with the entity's measurement bases or evaluation methods

in accordance with Reporting requirements for Tier 3 Not-for-profit Entities (Tier 3 (NFP) Standard) issued in New Zealand (NZ) by the NZ Accounting Standards Board.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit of the statement of financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) (ISAs (NZ)) and the audit of the statement of service performance and entity information in accordance with the ISAs (NZ) and New Zealand Auditing Standard (NZ AS) 1 (Revised) *The Audit of Service Performance Information*. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Performance Report* section of our report. We are independent of the TRUST in accordance with Professional and Ethical Standard 1 *International Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners (including international Independence Standards (New Zealand))* issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Other than in our capacity as auditor we have no relationship with, or interests in the TRUST.

Trustees' Responsibilities for the Performance Report

The Trustees are responsible for:

- The preparation, and fair presentation of the performance report in accordance with Tier 3 (NFP) Standard;
- The selection of the elements/aspects of the service performance, performance measures and/or descriptions and measurement bases or evaluation methods that present the service performance information that is appropriate and meaningful in accordance with Tier 3 (NFP) Standard;
- The preparation and fair presentation of service performance information in accordance with the TRUST's measurement bases or evaluation methods, in accordance with Tier 3 (NFP) Standard;
- The overall presentation, structure and content of the service performance information in accordance with Tier 3 (NFP) Standard; and
- Such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a performance report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the performance report, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the TRUST's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the TRUST or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Performance Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (NZ) and NZ AS 1 (Revised) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance report.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance report is located at the XRB's website at:

<https://www.xrb.govt.nz/standards/assurance-standards/auditors-responsibilities/audit-report-18-1/>

We communicate with the Trustees regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Restriction on responsibility

This report is made solely to the Trustees as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

AUDIT INTEGRITY

Audit Integrity Ltd

Chartered Accountants

East Tamaki, Auckland

4 June 2026

