#

**Ngā turanga mo ngā ra kei te heke mai**

 **Foundations for the future**

# 2024

#

# Putanga Toi ki Aotearoa

# Increasing access to the arts

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Arts Access Aotearoa’s *Ngā turanga mo ngā ra kei te heke mai Foundations for the future 2024*

 and *Te Arotake Performance Review 2024* can be downloaded from [artsaccess.org.nz/about-us](https://artsaccess.org.nz/about?src=nav)

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 2024.

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**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, a 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 to the arts. It does this my working with government agencies, arts organisations and community groups to drive change. It provides a national advisory and advocacy service, which includes an Info Hub on its website providing opportunities, information, resources and research findings.

### 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.

### 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.

### He turanga mo te kaha o te heke mai

### Foundations for a strong future

### Chair and Executive Director’s report on 2024

This year was one of significant funding, delivery and growth. We increased staff capacity; consulted and collaborated; and planned and activated to deliver major initiatives funded through Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

These initiatives, featured later in our annual report, have laid the foundations of a strong future for Arts Access Aotearoa – a future where d/Deaf and disabled artists are valued and audiences can access a rich arts experience; where arts programmes in prisons are recognised as an essential tool in prisoner rehabilitation; and where the contribution of community arts is understood and well-funded.

In an article on The Big Idea website, Arts Access Aotearoa was described as “the country's most outspoken advocates on removing barriers of participation for creative endeavours”.

Through our programmes – Arts For All, Creative Spaces, Arts in Corrections and Taha Hotu – Arts Access Aotearoa will continue to champion equity, accessibility and inclusion to ensure everyone in in this country has access to the arts.

 **Advocacy underpinned by research and data**For the first time, we have data about Deaf and disabled people – their attitudes, engagement and attendance, and the barriers they often face in accessing the arts.

Creative New Zealand’s benchmarked research, published this year in the report *New Zealanders and the Arts – Ko Aotearoa me ōna Toi,* tells us that the arts matter to Deaf and disabled people. For example, 61% of Deaf and disabled people participate in the arts – a figure significantly higher than the national average of 52%.

However, we also know there are barriers to accessing the arts that need to be addressed: barriers such as ticket prices, travel, physical access, a lack of confidence and someone to go with.

**Arts For All Network: addressing the barriers**

The Arts For All Network, facilitated by Arts Access Aotearoa, is the largest disability-led arts accessibility network in Aotearoa with more than 900 members. It works to address these barriers so that more people can access the arts.

Here’s one fine example: Auckland Theatre Company completed a relaxed performances pilot programme in 2024, enabling it to deliver relaxed performances of all its shows for 2025.

This year we added a new way to keep connected and introduced monthly online meetups, where individuals and organisations from across the country can connect, share and learn from each other.

These virtual gatherings complement our national hui and regional in-person hui, creating more opportunities for connection, learning and collaboration.

Arts Access Aotearoa was deeply saddened by the closure of Tim Bray Theatre Company at the end of this year due to the ill health of its founder and director, Tm Bray QSM. The recipient of the Arts Access Creative New Zealand Arts For All Award at Te Putanga Toi Arts Access Awards 2020, Tim Bray Theatre Company was a pioneer in accessibility.

Its closure is an immense loss and has left a hole in the heart of Aotearoa’s theatre for children.

**Evidence of the benefits of creative spaces**

This was the final year of Manatū Taonga’s three-year investment in creative spaces through the CARE Fund. Along with the Ministry’s funding to 54 creative spaces, Arts Access Aotearoa worked with the 65 members of the Creative Spaces Network to provide professional development in a range of areas such as cultural competency, governance and fundraising.

A feature of the year was Ngā Wāhi Auaha Creative Spaces Conference 2024, organised by Arts Access Aotearoa. Read about the Conference highlights on pages ?? and ??

Over the three years of the funding, Arts Access Aotearoa monitored the impact of the funding on recipients. By the end of 2024, we had analysed the data and produced a comprehensive report, called *Te kaha o ā tatou mahi – the power of our work.*

Our advocacy for and with creative spaces is all about ensuring their value is recognised so they receive sustainable, long-term funding. This report provides evidence of the social, health and wellbeing benefits that the creative spaces sector adds to New Zealand society.

Looking ahead to 2025, this report will be an invaluable tool as we advocate to central and local government for sustainable funding.

**Consulting Arts in Corrections Network members**

This was a year of consultation and consolidation for the Arts in Corrections Network, facilitated by Arts Access Aotearoa. We consulted with members of the four regional Networks to develop a set of values and principles.

At the same time, we worked closely with the members to shape the structure and content of a publication that Arts Access Aotearoa wrote with funding from Manatū Taonga’s Regeneration Fund.

Called *Te Ara ki Runga | The Path Up*, it’s a practical guide to support Arts in Corrections educators and Corrections staff on how best to deliver sustainable, high-quality art programmes in prisons and Community Corrections.

Neil Wallace, our Arts in Corrections Advisor, presented a session at the International Teaching Artist Conference in Auckland and spoke at various events throughout the year, advocating for the important role of the arts in supporting prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration.

This included Neil’s speech at the premiere in Auckland of *Sing Sing*, a movie set in Sing Sing Correctional Facility in New York state. In his review, Neil writes: “Decision-makers – policymakers, funders, educators – need to see *Sing Sing*. It is a clear and compelling case why arts programmes must be prioritised within prisons. The results are undeniable: safer communities, reduced recidivism and lives transformed.”

**Taha Hotu: leaning differently in the wind**

This year, Arts Access Aotearoa’s support for Deaf and disabled artists made significant progress, including the gifting of its name “Taha Hotu” by performance artist Rodney Bell (Ngaati Rooraa).

Explaining the name, Rodney wrote: “As a disabled community I believe we all lean differently in the wind so let’s hold on to the desire to lean towards each other, especially when we are in need of community or support.”

The logo was designed by Kim Anderson, a disabled designer, illustrator and writer. Reflecting the overall kaupapa of Taha Hotu, it includes connection and invitation (hands), an arts practice (rough texture), plus a journey, support and growth (harakeke).

Taha Hotu Deaf and Disabled Artists Initiative is a disability-led space for Deaf and disabled artists to network, collaborate and support each other.

With funding through Manatū Taonga’s Regeneration Fund and in consultation with Deaf and disabled artists, Arts Access Aotearoa developed resources and worked on building a website for Taha Hotu with our strategic partner, Flightdec. The website, to be launched in 2025, will host resources for artists, including in NZSL and Easy Read, across a range of topics such as creating an artist CV, budgeting and creative rights.

You can read more about the development of Taha Hotu on pages ? and ?

**Influencing the influencers**

Both central and local government are key players in ensuring a healthy arts infrastructure.

In May, Arts Access Aotearoa prepared a submission to the Wellington City Council about its Long-Term Plan 2024 – 2034.

In November, we submitted our response to the government’s draft arts strategy, Amplify. Our key message was that accessibility must be an integral part of the strategy.

And in December, Arts Access Aotearoa expressed its opposition to the government’s Treaty Principles Bill.

We also continue to work with Creative New Zealand on the implementation of its Tapatahi Accessibility Policy and Action Plan 2023 – 2028, outlining the ways it will work for all New Zealanders, with a focus on Deaf and disabled artists and arts practitioners, turi Māori (Māori Deaf), tāngata whaikaha Māori (disabled Māori) and disability communities.

**Funding and finances**

We acknowledge all of Arts Access Aotearoa’s funders, sponsors and supporters. Our activities across the country would not be possible without the grants, donations and in-kind support we receive. We are grateful to Creative New Zealand for its vital core funding. In addition, we have contracts with Ara Poutama Aotearoa and Manatū Taonga, and significant grants from Foundation North, Auckland Council and Wellington City Council.

In December, Arts Access Aotearoa launched its new fundraising strategy with a campaign to diversify its funding sources and help ensure a strong future.

In a competitive funding environment, we were pleased to report a surplus at the end of the year. This aligns with our overall objective of being financially sustainable in the long term.

**Thanks to staff and board**

As a Tiriti partner organisation, Arts Access Aotearoa continued to deepen its understanding and knowledge of te ao Māori. We were grateful for the support of our Kaumātua, Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp, who assumed the role following the passing of Kaumātua The Venerable Wiremu (Bill) Kaua in December 2023.

We would like to thank Arts Access Aotearoa’s staff, who continue to demonstrate whakawhanaugatanga, commitment and adaptability as they worked collectively to improve accessibility and inclusion in the arts.

And our sincere thanks to the board of trustees for the commitment and skills they bring to the organisation. In particular, we thank Lynley Hutton who completed her term as Chair in August. Thanks also to trustees Frances Turner and Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp, who retired from the board this year.

We welcomed Victoria Crockford as the new Chair. A warm welcome also to two new trustees: Hone Fletcher and Dr Samuele Paolo De Stefani.

As the year ended, we reflected with gratitude on the examples of kaitiakitanga and service our rangatira inspired us to provide. We look forward with strategic purpose to providing equitable and accessible arts for everyone in Aotearoa.

Victoria Crockford           Richard Benge MNZM

Trust Chair |Toihau                                    Executive DirectorI Kaiwhakahaere Matua

23 May 2025                                              23 May 2025

**Our people in 2024**

### Kaumātua

### Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp (Ngāti Ruapani, Ngāti Porou, Rongowhakaata, Kahungunu, English descent)

### Patron

Dame Miranda Harcourt ONZM

### Trustees

Lynley Hutton – Chair from August 2021, joined board in November 2017, retired in August 2024

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

Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp – joined board in August 2017, retired in August 2024

Rebecca McDonald PLY – joined board in April 2023

Dr Samuele Paolo De Stefani – joined board in August 2024

Paige Sullivan – joined board April 2021as a youth member and as a trustee in February 2022

Frances Turner – joined board in April 2021, retired in November 2024

#### Staff Richard Benge MNZM, Executive Director | Kaiwhakahaere Matua

#### Hannah Dahlke, Creative Spaces Senior Funding Advisor | Kaiārahi Kohi Moni

Dawa Devereux, Business Administrator | Kaipakihi

Andy Glanville, Arts in Corrections Activator | Whakahohe a Toi Ara Poutama

Airini Gordon, Administration and Projects Assistant | Kaiawhina Whakahaere a Mahi

Caleb Gordon, Projects Coordinator | Kairuruku a Toi

#### Cae Heke, Cultural Administrator | KaimanaakiKate Hiatt, Creative Spaces Funding Advisor | Kaiārahi Kohi Moni

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

#### Sophie Macdonald, Communications Advisor | Kaitautoko Whakarite

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 Project Coordinator | Kairuruku a toi Kaupapa

#### Dev Singh, Finance Manager | Kaiwhakahaere Putea

Conor Twyford, Policy Principal | Kaiārahi Kaupapa

#### Neil Wallace, Creative Spaces Funding Advisor | Kaiārahi Kohi Moni

Bobbie Grey, Creative Spaces Content Creator and Digital Media Specialist

Danny Amua, Creative Spaces Digital Content Specialist

### Volunteers

### Thanks to volunteers Ina Repizo, Vivecca Chatila, Amelia Romijn, Rajeev Mishra and Eileen Lockerd who did so much to support Arts Access Aotearoa and its work in 2024.

Include photo of Lynley and caption thanking her

**Wow times four – and many more**

There were many wow moments in 2024, celebrating accessibility in the arts in Aotearoa. Here are four of them.

**Lusi Faiva**

“ I’d love to take *Aiga* to other Pacific communities in Aotearoa and to international festivals, especially to Samoa,” says Lusi Faiva, a New Zealand Samoan performer and founding member of Touch Compass, a disability-led performance company in Auckland. [*Read the interview Lusi Faiva to premiere Aiga at Auckland Arts Festival 2024*](https://artsaccess.org.nz/Lusi-Faiva-to-premiere-Aiga-at-Auckland-Arts-Festival)

**Mark Lang**

“Māori culture, which most of my whakairo is based on, gives me the connection. The creative wellbeing aspect of whakairo in prison is massive. It's life-changing. And I'm living proof of that. Now I'm reaping the benefits from my mahi and also sharing it with the community,” says Mark Lang, whakairo expert, gallery owner and former prisoner. [Listen to the Art Inside podcast, *Carving out a better future with Mark Lang*](https://artsaccess.org.nz/Art-Inside-Mark-Lang)

**Jolt to Glasgow**

“A heady filmic and live exploration of New Zealand culture delivered in an exceptional way … utter perfection,” wrote a reviewer of Jolt’s performance of *Whakapapa* at the Gathered Together

24 in Glasgow, Scotland. [Read a blog by Richard Benge, called Telling stories “in the most beautiful way”](https://artsaccess.org.nz/Telling-stories-in-the-most-beautiful-way)

**Braille at NZ Opera**

NZ Opera has developed what it believes is world-first technology, enabling  the provision of Braille surtitles for live performance. “It felt like I was really included. Braille is my reading medium and to read the surtitles in real time on my Braille display was awesome. The surtitles refreshed when the singer got to the next line without me having to do anything. It was magic,” Paul Brown says. [Read the article The magic of Braille sutitles for live performance](https://artsaccess.org.nz/braille-surtitles-for-live-performance)

**Ngā Wāhi Auaha Creative Spaces Conference 2024**

Making valuable connections and being inspired, refreshed and enriched were among the words frequently used in feedback about Ngā Wāhi Auaha Creative Spaces Conference 2024, organised by Arts Access Aotearoa and held in Wellington on 22 and 23 August.

Funded by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage, the conference was attended by 150 creative space leaders, art tutors and artists from around the country at the Wellington venue with an additional 60 joining online.

Keynote speakers and panel discussions challenged, moved and inspired delegates. Workshops informed and encouraged. And a performance by Jolt dancers, who are travelling to Glasgow to perform “Whakapapa” at the Gathered Together festival in early September, delighted their audience.

Sarah Yuile, Manager of [Te Ara Korowai](https://www.tearakorowai.org.nz/about-us/) at Raumati Beach on the Kāpiti Coast, said: “We all need community, connection and support, including those who work in and run creative spaces. We found all this at the conference, as well as inspiration, momentum and re-ignited passion for what we do in making our communities a better place.”

And Kate Buckley of the [Arts4Me – WestREAP](https://www.westreap.org.nz/about-3) creative space on the West Coast, said: “Your planning and organisation was seamless, and the content was enriching and challenging in equal measure. We all got so much out if it and I can see it both influencing our work and our ways of working for a long time to come.”

For Fiona Sharp, who led Arts Access Aotearoa’s conference event team, a highlight of the conference was witnessing leaders, staff and artists of the Creative Spaces Network connect kanohi ki te kanohi.

"This event provided a great sense of collegial support, also demonstrating the strength we have as an arts advocacy movement," Fiona says.

**Regeneration Fund: delivering access and equity**

Arts Access Aotearoa delivered four significant projects in 2024, supported by a grant from Manatū Taonga’s Regeneration Fund. The projects have strengthened our organisational capability. They have also extended the reach and effectiveness of our programmes, encouraging greater access, inclusion and equity in the arts of Aotearoa.

**Project 1: Accessibility responsiveness training workshops**

This two-day, disability-led workshop was designed and is delivered by Deaf and disabled facilitators for the arts sector. The training provides understanding and insights into the experiences of Deaf and disabled communities, along with practical tools for improving accessibility in the arts.

These workshops are building a shared baseline of understanding across the arts sector, and improving the experiences of Deaf and disabled artists, arts workers and audiences. They are also strengthening the capability of our national Arts For All Network.

**Project 2: Artist resources on the Taha Hotu website**

Ten accessible resources supporting Deaf and disabled artists to build sustainable careers were created by and for this community of artists. These resources reflect and respond to the challenges and opportunities faced by this community.

Available in accessible formats, including New Zealand Sign Language and Easy Read, the resources are published on the Taha Hotu website. This is the new digital hub for Deaf and disabled artists. These resources represent a strategic investment in uplifting Deaf and disability culture within the arts.

**Project 3: Accessibility Impact Fund**

Through this project, we distributed 28 targeted accessibility grants, 15 to artists, and 13 to arts and access organisations. These grants enhanced the accessibility of creative work and increased opportunities for participation.

With 93 expressions of interest received, the programme revealed significant unmet demand and highlighted the ongoing need for dedicated funding in this area. The impact of the grants continues to be measured but early feedback confirms the value of targeted support.

**Project 4: A practical guide for Arts in Corrections educators**

*Te Ara ki Runga The Path Up* was written as a tool to support Arts in Corrections educators in designing and delivering meaningful arts programmes in prison environments. It was co-created through extensive regional hui, sector consultation, and collaboration with Ara Poutama Aotearoa staff, experienced educators and academic experts.

*Te Ara ki Runga* guides Arts in Corrections educators through topics such as cultural competence, trauma-informed practice and resilience in the role. Early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with indications that the resource is already having a positive impact on practice across the sector.

# Funders and sponsors Arts Access Aotearoa thanks the following organisations that have supported its work in increasing access to the arts in 2024. It looks forward to your ongoing support.

### Core funder

Creative New Zealand

### Major contracts

Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections

Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage

Oranga Tamariki

### Local government grants

Wellington City Council

Auckland Council

### Grants

Foundation North

Wellington Community Fund

Thomas George Macarthy Trust

### Legal services

Chapman Tripp

**Strategic partner**

Flightdec

### 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, Ren Levitan, Eileen Lockerd, Marianne Taylor, Aotea Centre, Teece Museum, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, The Kollective, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Toitoi: Hawke's Bay Arts & Events Centre for their in-kind support.

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

# Te Arotake Performance Review 2023

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Statement of service performance

Statement of financial performance

Statement of financial position

Statement of cash flows

Statement of accounting policies

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**Support our work**

You can help break down barriers and open up the arts to everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Your support is critical in helping us remove barriers and ensure that everyone – creators, performers, audience members – can participate in the arts.

**Make a donation**

Every donation makes a difference. Whether you make a one-off contribution or become a regular giver, you are investing in a more inclusive, creative Aotearoa.

Arts Access Aotearoa is a registered charitable trust. Donations of $5 or more are eligible for a tax credit. Every dollar helps extend the reach of our work.

**Sponsor or partner with us**

Align your business with a national arts leader dedicated to equity and inclusion. Sponsoring Arts Access Aotearoa shows your commitment to a fairer, more creative society and connects your brand to real, meaningful change.

**Leave a gift in your will**
A gift in your will helps us build a more inclusive future, one where all people can experience the power of arts and creativity for generations to come.

**Where your support goes**

When you give to Arts Access Aotearoa, you are helping us deliver impact across four key areas:

* **Taha Hotu:** supporting Deaf and disabled artists
* **Creative spaces:** building vibrant, inclusive communities through creativity
* **Arts For All Network:** making theatres, galleries and venues more accessible
* **Arts in Corrections:** using the arts to support prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community on release.

You can also choose the area you’d like your gift to support.

**Thank you for making a difference**

Your support makes our work possible.

For more information about how you can help, please contact Caleb Gordon, Fundraising and Projects Coordinator at 04 802 4349 or caleb.gordon@artsaccess.org.nz