

Performing arts

A photograph of a man with a beard and long hair tied back, wearing a black t-shirt. He is performing acrobatics on several thick ropes. He is looking upwards and to his right. The background is a deep red, and there are some faint white lines and shapes overlaid on the image.

The performing arts workforce is marked by a high degree of self-employment, contracting and freelance work. These professionals kindle the vital sparks of inspiration that light up New Zealanders' hearts and minds, and spread life and joy in our society.

The work of performing arts professionals in New Zealand is to expand the horizons of participants, through events, performances and spaces that entertain and inform, challenge and delight.

Whether through entertainment and events, or teaching and instruction, performing arts workers are practising a dynamic and stimulating craft. They kindle the vital sparks of inspiration that light up New Zealanders' hearts and minds, and spread life and joy in our society.

The performing arts workforce is marked by a high degree of self-employment, contracting and freelance work. Navigating a world of peaks and troughs, and irregular hours, performing arts professionals tend to be entrepreneurial and organised. Driven by their passion for their art, they are resilient, switched on and full of creative energy.

Industry structure

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS



National organisations including the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Creative New Zealand; performing arts and cultural organisations and specialist bodies such as Te Matatini, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, Dance New Zealand, Entertainment Venues Association of New Zealand, and Entertainment Technology New Zealand.

EMPLOYERS AND PROVIDERS



Production companies, technical service companies, theatre companies, temporary event and theatre spaces, and recording studios; private training establishments such as Toi Whakaari and the New Zealand School of Dance; community operators such as choirs and kapa haka groups; event venues, music industry organisations and private teachers of performing arts, dance, drama and music.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (COUNCILS)



Local authorities are the major owners and managers of residential and event spaces and studios in New Zealand, many of which service both sport and recreation, and the arts.

Workforce profile

There were some 29,825 people employed in performing arts in 2018, or 1.2% of the New Zealand workforce. Some 50.5% of all performing arts professionals were female, compared to 47.6% of the total workforce.

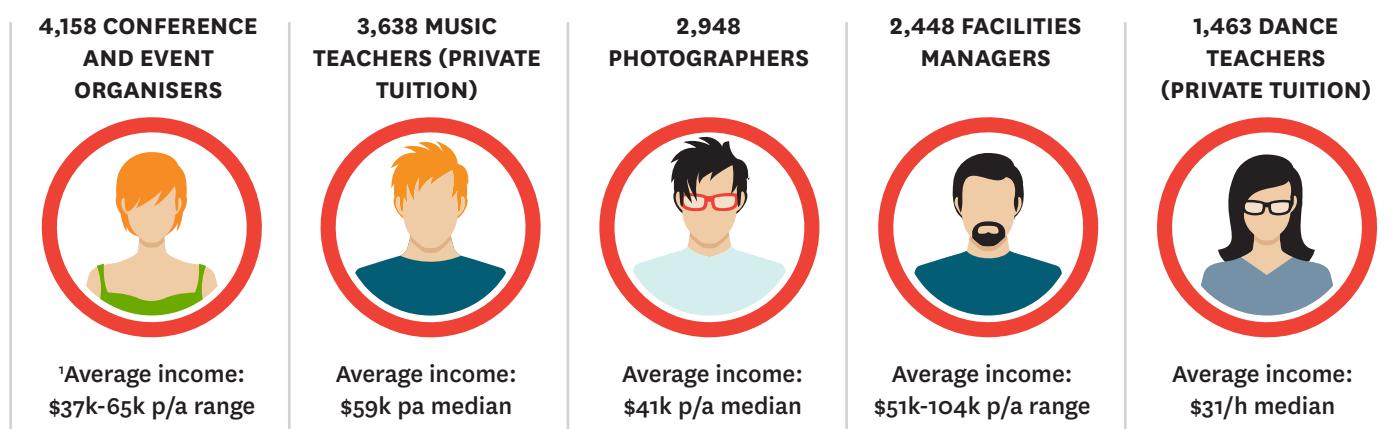
The performing arts industry saw a 2.9% increase in its workforce in 2018, with the rate of growth down compared to 2017, when the increase was 4.4%.

The workforce is forecast to grow by an annual average of 2.2% over the next five years to 2023 – representing a total of 3,238 new job openings.

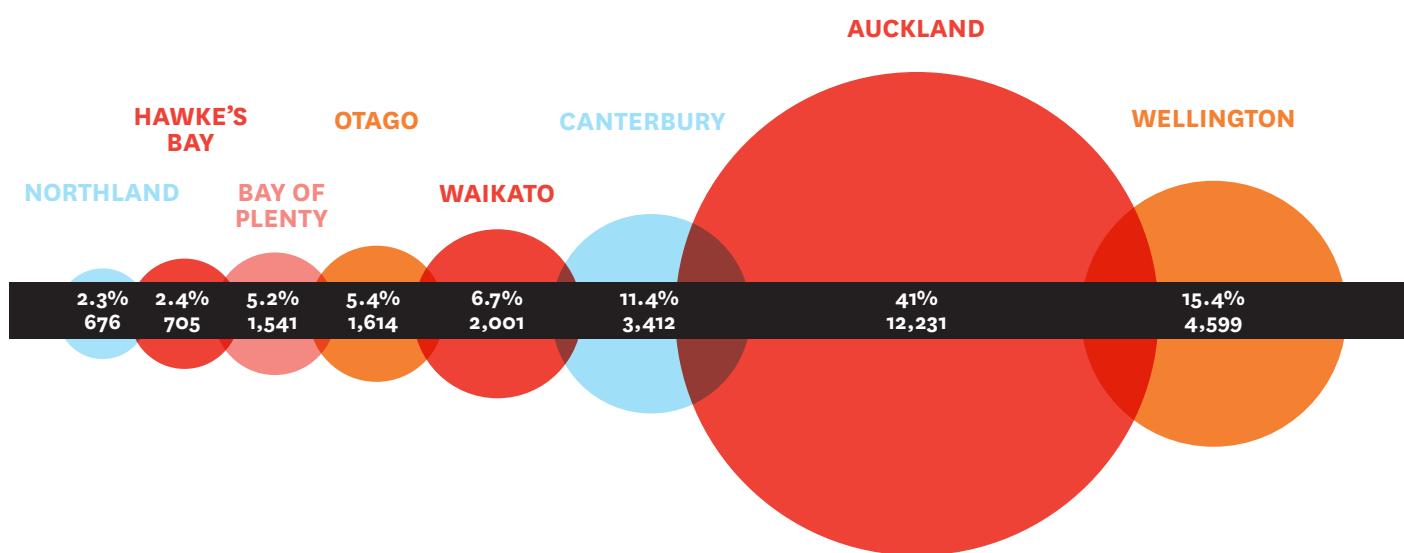


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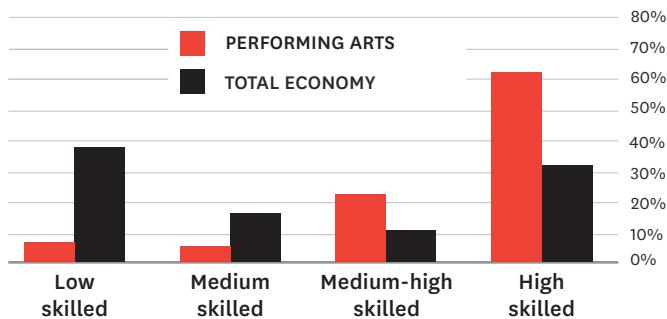
TOP FIVE JOBS BY VOLUME IN 2018



REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT (JOBS) IN 2018



SKILL LEVEL



AVERAGE EARNINGS

In 2017, the average annual income in performing arts was \$55,600 – compared to a figure of \$58,900 for the total economy.

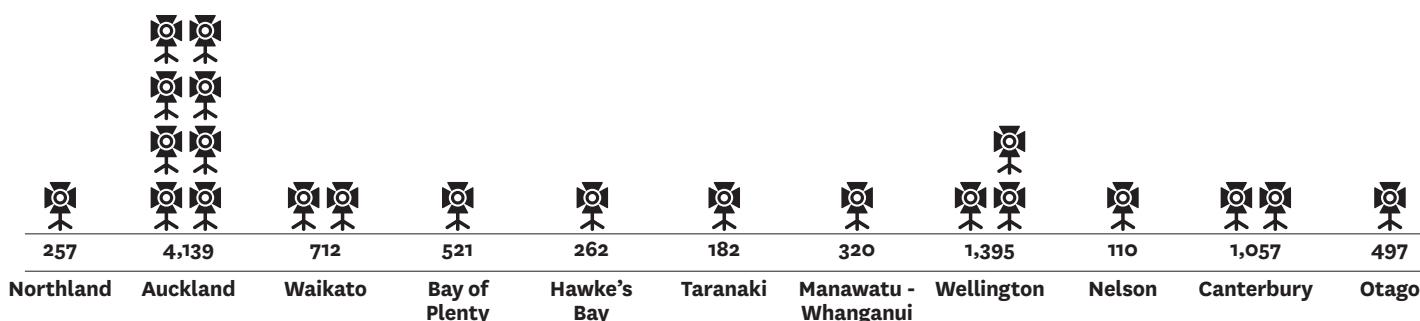
EARNINGS GROWTH

Industry salaries grew by an average of 2.8% per year between 2007 and 2017, compared to a figure of 3.2% per year for the total economy.

SELF EMPLOYMENT

The self employment rate in 2018 was 33.4% or 9,956 people. This is double the national rate of self-employment.

REGIONAL BUSINESS UNITS



Economic impact

The performing arts industry added \$2.3 billion to the New Zealand economy in 2018, or some 0.95% of total GDP.

The industry's GDP figure was up 2.3% in 2018, which represented a slowdown in growth after increasing by an average of 4.9% annually since 2015.

GDP per capita in the industry was \$89,181 – down 0.9% compared to the year before.

There were 9,883 performing arts businesses in New Zealand in 2018, each employing 3.0 people on average – up from 9,688 businesses in 2017.

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

\$2.3B
GDP

0.95% of New Zealand's GDP in 2018

Workforce challenges

A Skills Active survey of the performing arts workforce found that technician roles were among the most difficult for employers to source.

Many respondents said they relied on volunteers as part of their workforce, particularly for ushering, but also technical work and front of house.

The survey found that the high proportion of casual staff who were hired on an event-by-event basis, as well as high workloads, made it difficult to achieve long-term workforce planning and training goals.

"We are very busy with events and so any training that is done over a period of time (i.e. certificates rather than day courses) tends to take the back seat," one person said.

Many were community operators running on limited funding and resources, and this was another challenge. "It's hard to be creative, high-quality, and build staff competencies, when you are struggling to just achieve the basic logistics that need to happen each day."

Themes and trends

Some 55% of performing arts professionals also work outside the industry in order to supplement their income, according to a new survey from Creative NZ and NZ On Air.²

It noted that only 23% of creative professionals were "living comfortably" on their income, while 40% were "getting by" and the remainder were finding it difficult or very difficult.³

The survey also found that the more hours per week creative professionals spent on their creative work, rather than side jobs, the more likely they were to be satisfied with their careers.⁴

Despite the challenges for the industry, performing arts continues to deliver economic and social gains around the country.

A briefing on the 2018 New Zealand International Film Festival reported that it created 393 full-time equivalent jobs, and delivered \$24.4 million in GDP for the Wellington region.⁵

In Auckland, the summer stadium concert season brought in over \$20 million in visitor spending. Regional Facilities Auckland also introduced a number of accessibility measures, such as audio-described opera performances, and sign-language interpreted talks.⁶

Meanwhile, Christchurch mayor Lianne Dalziel has said performing arts will be critical to the city's recovery. The Council has committed \$30 million to the development of the dedicated performing arts precinct, which will include the Music Centre and the rebuilt Court Theatre.⁷



Active Careers through
On-Job Qualifications

²A Profile of Creative Professionals, 2019, Creative NZ and NZ On Air
³Ibid

⁴Ibid

⁵NZ International Film Festival Report 2018, BERL

⁶Annual Report 2018/19, Regional Facilities Auckland