

Te Waha o Tāne

The Voice of the Forest

Te kano ki te rau Report summary

Te Waha o Tāne workforce development plan (WDP) for Toi Pāho (the screen and broadcast sector) follows the inaugural WDP by Toi Mai, *Te Wao Nui o Toi* (published in 2023). While that highlighted the challenges facing the screen industry's below-the-line workforce (production crew roles), *Te Waha o Tāne* focuses on the needs of the above-the-line workforce (producers, directors and writers). Given the interdependence of the above- and below-the-line workforces for success, many of the insights gained through *Te Wao Nui o Toi* in 2023 are still relevant in this plan.

Our research is informed by data and a subset of interviews and engagements with above-the-line screen industry experts and game development specialists, highlighting the challenges and opportunities specific to producers, directors and writers. These challenges include:

- formal, linear and long-form education not providing the skills and experience needed by learners and valued by industry
- government funding for vocational education and training not going to where it is most needed by industry
- a need for more entrepreneurial, industry-specific business skills in the workforce, alongside resources to train the wider workforce in these skills
- squeezed public development funding constraining the pipeline of domestic production
- production credits and associated credibility often being confined to established screen workers and bigger game development studios
- investments in screen productions – particularly television – favouring those with proven track records, making it difficult for people to enter the industry.

Te Waha o Tāne contextualises these findings with an extension of the thriving forest metaphor used in *Te Wao Nui o Toi*.

Tāne is the guardian of te wao (the forest), and “te waha” refers to their voice. It is the birds of the forest whose singing provides this voice. Since the above-the-line workforce comprises of script writing, directing and producing in all screen-based media, we feel that *Te Waha o Tāne* captures the spirit of these roles.

Te Waha o Tāne gives an overview of the sector’s training needs for those in creative leadership roles. It provides actionable guidance and recommendations in order to amplify the voice of the industry, build a diverse and capable workforce, and enable our Toi Pāho industry to thrive by ’35.

Kia pai i te hua

Strategic goals and recommendations

Our recommendations

- Industry-aligned, short-form training that is designed, funded and delivered to meet industry standards.
- Clearer pathways between providers and industry, and to facilitate a more diverse workforce through work-based upskilling.
- Improved coordination of training with production workflow for more sustainable careers.
- Improved visibility of the variety of roles in screen throughout our schooling systems for all learners.

Toi Mai actions

Toi Mai to:

1. develop industry-specific micro-credentials in business development for screen producers
2. explore the funding flows of tertiary screen programmes and advice the Tertiary Education Commission on alternative funding models for more industry-delivered training.

To download the full plan, visit toimai.nz