

# Torona Pakiakatia Stretching Deep

Māori & Pacific Conservators & Curators Workforce  
Development Plan public consultation feedback summary

Toi Mai Workforce Development Council undertook a review of the Māori and Pacific Conservators and Curators workforce in the first half of 2025, supported by semi-structured interviews with industry members and quantitative workforce information. A draft of the plan, *Torona Pakiakatia (Stretching Deep)*, which included proposed actions and recommendations, was circulated for public consultation for three weeks in July and August 2025. This feedback has been compiled and is summarised below and includes responses and developments or changes to the actions and recommendations in the plan as a result of the feedback.

For actions and recommendations with no immediate changes, given the proposed timeframes and the dissolution of Toi Mai Workforce Development Council on 31 December 2025, Toi Mai proposes the future Industry Skills Board that takes over the GLAMMI sector consider continuation of this work.

## Ngā keri Actions

**Toi Mai to undertake a review of the NZQA Level 4 New Zealand Certificate in Museum Practice with a goal of strengthening indigenous knowledge and skills within the qualification.**

Feedback on this action demonstrated widespread support for strengthening indigenous knowledge within the qualification. Respondents emphasised the importance of integrating mātauranga Māori and Pacific knowledge throughout the qualification rather than as an add-on. However, concerns were raised about ensuring the qualification maintains relevance across different iwi and Pacific communities, with suggestions that consultation with diverse indigenous groups would be essential during the review process. Some feedback indicated that the review should examine pathways between this Level 4 qualification and higher-level training opportunities to ensure clear progression routes for Māori and Pacific learners.

### **Toi Mai to consider developing a strand/specialisation for indigenous conservator technician.**

Support emerged for developing this specialisation, with respondents viewing it as addressing a critical gap in current training offerings.

*Toi Mai has started a review of the Certificate in Museum Practice and will develop strands for collections and indigenous conservator and will circulate these proposed changes and additions for public consultation in September 2025 for submission to NZQA by October 2025.*

### **Toi Mai to investigate further options for work-based learning at a sub-degree level in the museum sector.**

Respondents strongly supported investigating work-based learning options, recognising these as more accessible pathways for many Māori and Pacific learners. Feedback consistently emphasised that practical, hands-on learning approaches align better with indigenous learning preferences and community needs. Several submissions highlighted the importance of ensuring that work-based learning programmes maintain strong connections to iwi and Pacific communities rather than solely focusing on mainstream museum contexts. Concerns were raised about the need for appropriate mentorship and supervision structures to ensure quality outcomes for learners in work-based programmes.

*As part of reviewing the Certificate in Museum Practice and adding strands, Toi Mai will work with ServicelQ who currently deliver the qualification to make sure the strands complement work-based learning.*

### **Toi Mai to explore apprenticeships, internships, traineeships and vocational qualifications.**

This action received considerable support, with feedback indicating these pathways could address both accessibility barriers and the sector's practical workforce needs. Respondents viewed apprenticeships and traineeships as particularly valuable for creating sustainable employment pathways while building skills. Submissions emphasised the importance of ensuring these programmes include living wages and adequate support for participants.

### **Toi Mai to continue to provide advice to the Tertiary Education Commission around the need to invest in vocational training for curators and conservators.**

Feedback supported continued advocacy with TEC, with respondents emphasising the urgency of addressing funding constraints that limit programme development and delivery. Respondents stressed the need for TEC to understand the unique requirements of indigenous workforce development, including the importance of cultural mentorship, community connection, and holistic support approaches that may require different resource allocations than mainstream programmes.

### **Toi Mai to continue gathering data about workforce needs.**

Support was expressed for ongoing data collection, with feedback emphasising the importance of gathering qualitative alongside quantitative information. Respondents highlighted that understanding the experiences and aspirations of current Māori and Pacific practitioners would be as valuable as demographic statistics. Submissions also suggested expanding data collection to include Pacific-specific information as Pacific peoples' experiences in the sector may differ significantly from Māori experiences and require distinct approaches.

## Ngā kō Recommendations

**Toi Mai recommends that if conservators and curators transition to an Industry Skills Board (ISB), the ISB should partner with Manatū Taonga | Ministry for Culture & Heritage and other stakeholders – including iwi, Māori, Pacific and sector groups, and education providers – to address mutually agreed priorities from the draft Amplify strategy.**

Feedback indicated support for ensuring Māori and Pacific representation remains central in any transition to an ISB structure. Respondents emphasised that meaningful partnership requires genuine power-sharing and decision-making authority for indigenous stakeholders, not merely consultation. Some submissions expressed concerns about maintaining momentum on indigenous workforce development priorities during any structural transitions. Feedback highlighted the importance of ensuring existing relationships and trust built through the work of Toi Mai would be preserved and strengthened under new arrangements.

**Make cultural education accessible: Develop a systematic approach to culture and heritage education by potentially offering secondary schools' vocational pathways, such as developing culture and heritage practice at NZQA levels 2 and 3.**

This recommendation received support, with respondents viewing early exposure to cultural and heritage careers as essential for building future workforce pipelines. Feedback emphasised that secondary-level programmes could help address misconceptions about museum and heritage careers while inspiring young Māori and Pacific students. Several submissions suggested that such programmes should include strong connections to local marae, cultural centres and Pacific community organisations to ensure authentic cultural grounding. Concerns were raised about ensuring secondary teachers would have appropriate cultural competency and sector knowledge to deliver these programmes effectively.

**Integrate or consolidate current training programmes: The proposed ISB should undertake a critical assessment of existing cultural practitioner programme offerings to determine how learning content and outcomes can be better marketed, integrated or consolidated.**

Feedback supported rationalising the current fragmented training landscape while expressing caution about losing valuable specialised programmes during consolidation processes. Several submissions highlighted that consolidation efforts should prioritise maintaining community connections and cultural authenticity over administrative efficiency. Concerns were expressed about ensuring that programmes delivered by iwi and Pacific organisations would be valued equally with mainstream institutional offerings.

**Further research into Pacific peoples working in the culture and heritage sector: The findings from this research are limited about the provision of equitable workforce development and training pathways for Pacific people in cultural practitioner roles, including conservation and curatorial roles.**

Support was expressed for Pacific-specific research, with feedback acknowledging that Pacific communities' experiences and needs may differ significantly from Māori experiences. Respondents emphasised that such research should be Pacific-led and ensure diverse Pacific voices are heard. Several submissions highlighted Pacific research should examine both barriers and existing strengths within Pacific communities, including traditional knowledge systems and cultural practices that could inform workforce development approaches. Feedback indicated understanding diaspora experiences and connections to Pacific nations would be important components of such research.