

Tēnā koe,

Thursday, 23 March 2023

TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU SCREEN SECTOR RESPONSE TO AUCKLAND COUNCIL'S PROPOSED BUDGET 2023-24

Screen Production is good business for Auckland.

Screen Auckland's 2022 Data Overview shows that:

- Screen (including production, post-production, and visual effects) is worth \$1.523 billion to the Auckland economy.
- The sector directly employs 8405 people in Auckland, up from 7500 in 2021.
- There are 2322 screen business units located here, 48% of the national screen sector.

Of the \$800+ million spend on production in the Auckland region 60% of that, almost half a billion dollars, was spent with Auckland businesses – hotels and restaurants, vehicle and equipment hire businesses, all of which did it tough during the Covid-19 restrictions.

In a recent economic impact report of screen production activity in New Zealand¹ less than 40% of spend on a film or TV show is screen-industry. Attracting and servicing screen production in Auckland makes very good financial sense, for those who work on productions, but even more so for the city as a whole.

We support the Auckland Plan 2050's aim that 'Auckland is prosperous with many opportunities and delivers a better standard of living for everyone'. Auckland Council has an economic development plan for the region – the most recent of these for 2021-2024 has the objectives of:

- Attracting people and investment
- Enabling thriving local economies
- Supporting quality jobs and skill development
- Preparing businesses for Auckland's future
- Infrastructure that enables economic development
- Regulations that enable economic development

Now is the time to invest in Auckland's future. Continuing to support screen directly through Tātaki Auckland Unlimited in turn supports the local economy, the hospitality sector, tourism, and retail to generate much needed revenue. A thriving city improves social cohesion, wellbeing, and our quality of life. It makes a city more inclusive and welcoming. Helps to attract and retain new residents and industry. A thriving city also boosts the local economy, creates jobs, and makes for a more prosperous city.

QUESTIONS

1. What economic analysis has been done by Council on the impacts these cuts will have on Auckland's economy and employment, over the short, medium, and long term?
2. How many Aucklanders' jobs (outside those at Council and within CCOs) will be at risk, both via direct and indirect employment?
3. What are the long-term effects of the proposed cuts to Tātaki Auckland Unlimited. On last year's figures, the proposed \$2 million saving will cost the city \$800 million of lost activity. Is that the intended outcome?

Screen production is a dynamic and complex ecosystem, and a change of this magnitude will have long term impacts. We are very concerned that the Budget proposals have been prepared without due diligence, and the potential negative impact on the future of the screen sector in Auckland has not been properly considered and understood.

¹ Olsberg Report: <https://www.nzfilm.co.nz/resources/olsberg-spi-report-economic-impact-new-zealand-screen-production-sector>

ALTERNATIVE

We recommend the Auckland City Council continue to invest in its economic development programmes, and to increase borrowing and/or raise rates for residential and business ratepayers to cover that cost.

Other Councils, such as in Wellington, have decided to confront reality with a proposed 13% rates rise to fill the shortfall and make the necessary investment in a thriving and resilient city.

CONCLUSION

The interconnectedness of the screen sector ecosystem is equivalent to the Auckland City Council's ecosystem. What may look like a small change in one area can have unexpected consequences or impact. The screen sector also knows how hard it is to make budgets go the distance. Budgets are always tight and are getting tighter by the day. We believe that continuing to invest in story, in people, in culture, in what connects with people's hearts and minds, is the key to success both now and in the future. We believe it will also be the key to the Auckland City Council's continued success – invest, grow, and prosper.

The signatories of this letter, the representative bodies of the individual screen practitioners and businesses, call on you to consider the economic, social and wellbeing impacts of these budget cuts, specifically to Tātaki Auckland Unlimited.

Yours Sincerely,

Co-Authors

[Film Auckland Inc](#) and [SPADA](#)

Signatories

Directors and Editors Guild of Aotearoa New Zealand

DocEdge

Equity New Zealand | Mana Taurite Aotearoa

New Zealand Cinematographers Society

New Zealand Writers Guild | Puni Taatuhi o Aotearoa

Ngā Aho Whakaari | Māori in Screen

Pan Asian Screen Collective

Screen Industry Guild of Aotearoa New Zealand

Script to Screen

Women in Film and Television New Zealand

FilmAuckland

spada^(nz)
the screen production
and development association

degnz
directors & editors guild of nz
ngā kaiwherawhera kiriata

**doc
edge**

equity
NEW ZEALAND

NZCS

NZWG
New Zealand Writers Guild
Puni Taatuhi O Aotearoa

**NGĀ
AHO
WHAKAARI**
MĀORI IN SCREEN

**P-A
S-C** PAN-ASIAN
SCREEN
COLLECTIVE

**SCRIPT TO
SCREEN**
TE TARI TUHI KUPU A WHAKAAHUA

SCREEN GUILD
INDUSTRY
AOTEAROA • NEW ZEALAND INC

WIFT NZ
WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION
NGĀ WĀHINE O TE ARO WHITĀHUA