

NZSWG

New Zealand Writers Guild Puni Taatuhi O Aotearoa

NZSWG SUBMISSION

'PROPOSED TE PŪKENGĀ OPERATING MODEL'

NOVEMBER 2021

Tēnā koe,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission about the proposed Te Pūkenga operating model. As screenwriters have very little visibility within current NZQA / ANZIC codes, we welcome a flexible, learner-centric approach, more pathways to vocational training, and the opportunity for this kōrero.

We wholly support WeCreate's submission regarding the proposed Te Pūkenga Operating Model, and also support Annie Collins' submission on behalf of screen industry guilds. We write this submission to specifically address the learning needs of writers in the screen sector.

WHO WE ARE

New Zealand Writers Guild (NZWG) is the professional membership association and registered trade union of Aotearoa New Zealand script writers, established in 1976. NZWG is committed to working in a way that adheres to the spirit and the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. NZWG is a member of the International Affiliation of Writers Guilds (IAWG), Council of Trade Unions (CTU NZ) and WeCreate.

WRITERS ARE CURRENTLY UNDERSERVED IN EDUCATION & VOCATIONAL TRAINING

As mentioned above, there are currently very few NZQA qualifications that serve screenwriters. In fact, there are none specifically for screenwriters. There are qualifications for film (crew) and creative writing (prose), but very little designed to serve writers who wish to work in the screen sector. Screenwriters fit perfectly within a vocational pathway - learning and earning - which is why, in principle, we welcome this opportunity to engage in the development of this operating model. In this process, we want to ensure that screenwriters' voices, underserved in the past, are listened to.

A NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY

Due to a number of factors, such as copyright and the project-based nature of the work that screenwriters do, most writers working in the screen sector are independent contractors. Because of this, an on-the-job training model for screenwriters will need to look different to that of the other sectors. This model should be flexible, and be able to adapt to the ever-changing needs of the sector. For instance, new storytelling mediums and technologies, such as VR and gaming platforms, continue to emerge. Writers will be best served by a model

that is 'future-proofed' to meet the ever-changing demands of the sector. Microcredentials that are stackable through different jobs and projects will be key to achieving this flexibility.

Here are a few other factors that should be considered, to achieve the flexibility required for writers, and for the screen sector as a whole:

FLEXIBILITY AND VARIETY IN QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

- Qualifications at all levels (certificates, diplomas, degrees)
- Microcredentials that are quality and portable (stackable through different jobs and projects)
- Microcredentials that are laser-focused and cater to specific needs (eg: writing for VR)
- Milestone qualifications (eg: if studying for a degree, the completion of a year earns students an appropriate level diploma or certificate)

FLEXIBILITY IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- Online and campus based opportunities (writing has proven to be 'COVID-proof', and training for writers lends itself to online learning more than other screen sector jobs)

MEETING REGIONAL NEEDS

Each region has different needs. For instance, there is a strong push for TV in Auckland, while both Wellington and Dunedin have a growing need within emerging digital / gaming storytelling. Training must cater to the needs of each region and allow for industry growth. Therefore, we will need to ensure that industry in each region has a strong voice in the Te Pūkenga operational model. For this reason, we share WeCreate's sentiments regarding the national approach of 'single unified programmes'. We do not feel that this approach will serve the needs of our sector, and will likely hinder sector growth. Ongoing communication with industry, and a flexible approach that targets the specific (and evolving) needs of each region is required in our view.

IN CONCLUSION

To reiterate, we support WeCreate and Annie Collins' submissions. And, in offering the above suggestions regarding the needs of writers in the screen sector, we believe flexibility, 'microcredentialing', and a focus on regional needs are the best approach for this operating model.

Rene le Bas | Board Member
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