



Entertainment Technology New Zealand



PO Box 19108  
Marion Square  
Wellington 6149

27 January 2022

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister  
Hon Grant Robertson, Minister of Finance

Cc:

Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage  
Hon Kiri Allan, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage  
Hon Stuart Nash, Minister for Economic and Regional Development, and Minister for Tourism

Tēnā koe Prime Minister, Tēnā koe Minister Robertson,

Once again it is a truly disheartening that we in the event and entertainment industry find ourselves severely impacted by the move to Covid Protection Framework Level Red. The new gathering restrictions are challenging our ability to provide events and entertainment to New Zealand more than ever before. While as we keep getting told we are not in Lockdown, the restriction is imposing a lockdown on the sector. Despite the two shots for summer campaign getting us to the 24<sup>th</sup> of January, our summer season of work was far from over.

**We now ask for the opportunity to further discuss the following topics with you directly to explain the circumstances and the need for further assistance, namely:**

- 1. A sector specific wage subsidy scheme, or another form of sector-specific financial support, to continue to support our freelancers and businesses who meet the loss criteria, until the whole country can return to Orange and be able to gather again. Our industry is unable to operate while there are gathering restrictions in place, and we are desperately in need of further support to ensure we still have suppliers, staff, and venues functioning and able to hold events while capped capacity limits are in place.**
- 2. Once we are able to hold events with uncapped gathering sizes, support to encourage events such as the continuation of current schemes to cover sunk costs due to the need to postpone or cancel events or to encourage funding for future events (such as Matariki celebrations).**
- 3. We ask for a seat at the table to discuss and develop strategies with Government to safely hold events as we continue to make our way through this pandemic, ensuring our industry will be prepared to meet any new requirements.**

As we are all aware, this pandemic is near on two years of impacts on the sector globally. The #WeMakeEvents worldwide movement began in order to recognise the many entertainment technology industry professionals behind every concert, show, festival, and event and to bring awareness of the support required during this pandemic. Here in Aotearoa, we represent this movement locally. As stated previously, Entertainment Technology New Zealand is a professional association of people involved in the technical aspects of the events and entertainment industry ranging from technicians, designers, and managers through to scenic builders and equipment suppliers. We link to the entire supply chain, encompassing manufacturing and distribution, production and design, stage crew, venues, and infrastructure staff. Many in our industry are self-employed freelance technicians and sole traders who do not have large capital reserves, nor the ability to raise capital to subsist for any length of time, without the ability to work.

The people and entities we represent often do not fit well under a single ministry and we still find ourselves



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being bounced between the Ministry of Culture and Heritage and the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment.

A lot of the funding for the arts, events and entertainment is directed towards producers and creatives with the expectation that through trickle-down economics it reaches the supply chain. This, however, is often not achieved in a timely manner as those whose role it is to present the work are often not engaged until work on the project is well underway and close to presentation.

We respect the fact that this pandemic presents a very challenging time and decisions are not made lightly. New Zealand's comparative success in managing COVID-19 is internationally recognized as exemplary and is a testament to excellent leadership, and we do want to play our part in keeping our audiences, freelancers, and businesses safe from COVID-19.

To conclude, please can I bring your attention back to the devastation continuing to be felt by the entertainment and event technology sector due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and what can be done to help mitigate these effects.

We look forward to your response and to further constructive contributions around the discussion table.

Ngā manaakitanga,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicki Cooksley'.

Vicki Cooksley  
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#### *Background on ETNZ*

*Entertainment Technology New Zealand (ETNZ) is a professional association of people involved in the technical aspects of the event and entertainment industry. We have a broad membership of people ranging from students and individual practitioners through to larger national and international companies. Our goal is to support the New Zealand entertainment and event industry through professional development, advocacy, and safety. ETNZ have worked closely with Skills Active Aotearoa, who have lodged formal qualifications for our industry onto the New Zealand Qualification Framework and developed unit standards to meet these qualifications. ETNZ have also built relationships with like organisations from around the world.*