

2025-2026 Funding Plan

Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Board

Te Poari ā-Takiwā Tuku Pūtea Taonga Whakaahuru

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Chair's Report

Kua raranga tahi tātou he whāriki, hei hāpai ake ngā whānau o Tāmaki Makaurau.

Collectively, we weave a mat that elevates the people of Auckland.

Ten months before the funding year starts, the Funding Board receives applications for the 2025-2026 year. A lot can happen in that time. What hasn't changed is the focus by Auckland Council on finances, being economical, and doing what it can to reduce rates increases for ratepayers. The Funding Board has been sensitive to the burden on ratepayers and has encouraged alliances amongst the Specified Amenities. The Funding Board has also encouraged the Amenities to focus on their core business rather than expanding activities.

The cost-of-living crisis has impacted so many and consumer spending is down. However, inflation is easing. At the time of writing, inflation had fallen to 2.2 per cent. With this in mind, the Funding Board proposed modest increases in funding.

The Auckland Regional Helicopter Trust (ARHT) did not apply for funding for the 2025-2026 year.

One of the benefits of the Funding Board structure is that directors acquire a lot of knowledge about the way each Amenity operates. This depth of knowledge combined with a rigorous assessment of the funding applications presented by the Amenities provides a thorough audit and assurance process. The funds granted will meet the unique needs of each Specified Amenity.

The grants to the Specified Amenities in 2025-2026 will total \$18,171,904, representing an overall modest increase of \$644,904 or 3.68%. Many of the Amenities continue to return a significant proportion of the annual levy back to Auckland Council in the form of rent, hire charges, rates, and regulatory charges. For the 2025-2026 year that amount is estimated to be \$2,530,000 (or 14% of the total levy). This is particularly true of the Auckland Arts Festival (Auckland Festival Trust), which expects to return 26% of its grant to Auckland Council. It is important, in the interests of financial transparency, that these transactions are properly recorded to reflect the true costs of providing these services for the enjoyment and benefit of Aucklanders.

There is still some uncertainty ahead with the direction Auckland Council may choose to take with reviewing the legislation. The Funding Board is confident it has been an economical vehicle to ensure that the money distributed to the Specified Amenities is done thoughtfully and appropriately. The Funding Board sees itself as good stewards of ratepayer's money. We also understand the importance for the Specified Amenities of having certainty of income to allow them to deliver to ratepayers the many, varied and important functions they each have.

As you will read in this document, all the Specified Amenities make a unique and important contribution to Auckland. I encourage you to read how they do this.



Nga mihi nui,

Victoria Carter ONZM

Chairperson

Introduction

This Funding Plan, covering the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, is published by the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Board (Funding Board).

The 2025-2026 Funding Plan represents the sixteenth year that the Funding Board has assessed and recommended the distribution of grants to the Specified Amenities. However, it will be the seventeenth year that grants have been distributed to the Specified Amenities. The Funding Board believes that the funding levels in this plan align with the key funding principles outlined in the Act and in accordance with the Act's primary purpose, namely the provision of a mechanism for adequate, sustainable and secure funding for the Specified Amenities.

Background

The Funding Board was established in 2009 following the introduction of the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act 2008 ('the Act'). The Act introduced a levy to be imposed on Auckland Council. The Funding Board collects the funds via an Auckland Council rates levy and distributes this funding as grants to the Specified Amenities named in the legislation. The Act aims to establish a mechanism that provides funding to support the ongoing sustainability of the organisations named in the Act that deliver arts, culture, recreation, heritage, rescue services, and other facilities and services to the wider population of the Auckland region. All Specified Amenities make significant contributions towards making Auckland an attractive global city.

The maximum funding permissible in the Act is no more than 2% of the rates collected by Auckland Council in the previous financial year. For 2025-2026, the maximum levy cap has been calculated as \$50,680,000. The Funding Board continues to assess each application on its merits. It does not regard the maximum levy cap as either a target or a notional budget to work towards. The proposed 2025-2026 levy represents just 0.72% of Auckland Council rates revenue (0.77% for 2024-2025), and 36.60% of the maximum levy amount permitted under the legislation (39.10% for 2024-2025).

The Funding Board has no role in the day-to-day governance of any entities named in the Act. The sole purpose of the Funding Board is to administer the provisions of the Act, which primarily comprises determining the levy to be collected from Auckland Council and then distributing that as grants to the Specified Amenities. Each of the Specified Amenities retains its own board of governance and management and is therefore responsible for the decisions made regarding the organisation's operations. Decisions made by a Specified Amenity that may have operational funding implications do not automatically trigger an increase in grant funding to contribute to any increased costs associated with those decisions.

Similarly, increased public expectations of service delivery need to be tempered with the public's and other users' willingness to pay for such services. If other users of a service are unwilling or unable to increase the amounts paid, it does not automatically mean that increased grant funding will be made available through this regional funding process.

While the Funding Board is aware that in some cases, the ability for some of the Specified Amenities to access alternative sources of revenue is becoming more challenging, in part because they are a recipient of funding via the Funding Board, the availability of grant funding via the Funding Board for the entities does not replace the requirement for each entity to continue to generate revenue from other sources. In other instances, continued support from the Funding Board may assist, providing confidence to other funders around matters of relevance, sustainability, and governance of the Specified Amenity. Some of the Specified Amenities are particularly successful with their fundraising activities, reducing their reliance on this grant funding. Whatever circumstances

apply, the Funding Board is cognisant of both the statutory requirement and Auckland Council's request that the Specified Amenities make all reasonable endeavours to maximise funding from other available funding sources.

Grants provided through the regional funding provisions are assessed on an annual basis. That means annual funding applications are assessed on their merit, allowing changes in economic and environmental matters to be considered as they arise. It allows grants to either increase or decrease as the Board considers appropriate, noting that the Act does not stipulate that annual grant funding should remain at a minimum or constant level.

The relative certainty of obtaining on-going regional funding via the Act enables each of the Specified Amenities to plan strategically and operationally. Over time, funding security has enabled the amenities to demonstrate significant improvements to the Funding Board, both in regional reach and the quality of the services being delivered to residents of Auckland.

The grants distributed to the Specified Amenities are derived from a levy paid to the Funding Board by Auckland Council and, by extension, the ratepayers of Auckland. Both the Funding Board and Specified Amenities are aware of the source of this funding. Accordingly, each Specified Amenity is encouraged to ensure that advertising, promotional material, and funding acknowledgements recognise the role of Auckland Council and the ratepayers of Auckland.

The Funding Board recognises that for some of the Specified Amenities, the grants are the largest single source of funding received. However, numerous other partner organisations are also involved in supporting them and funding many aspects of the Specified Amenities work, some of which are highlighted in this Funding Plan. That is important, as much of their work depends on developing and maintaining strong links with partners to ensure consistent and sustainable service delivery. It also means that the outputs and outcomes from each entity becomes a balancing act of taking the expectations of each funder into account while maintaining its own integrity, purpose and direction.

Climate Plan

The Funding Board has not developed a specific Climate Plan relating to its operation. Over the years, the Funding Board has migrated its administrative activities online. All documents, such as agendas, minutes, and funding applications, are securely stored and transferred electronically. A previous requirement for Specified Amenities to submit hard-copy material was dispensed with many years ago, reducing resource consumption.

The Funding Board meets approximately ten times a year, using shared workspaces. There remains little the Funding Board can achieve to reduce its impact any further. Still, it is noted that the meeting rooms are close to ferry, bus and train stations in the city centre, allowing some Funding Board members to use public transport where possible to attend meetings.

The Specified Amenities have been undertaking various activities to minimise their carbon footprint and environmental impact. Examples are provided in the individual commentaries for each amenity that follows.

Māori Engagement

On a day-to-day basis, the activities of the Funding Board do not necessitate direct engagement with Māori regarding the business of the Funding Board. Under the provisions of the Act, Auckland Council has appointed a director whose specific role is to overview the interests of Māori in the wider Auckland region when the Funding Board engages with the Specified Amenities.

Through the actions of this position, the Specified Amenities have all increased their awareness of the role of Māori in the Auckland region. They have also created specific programmes that interact with Māori or seek Māori input into the varying outputs and outcomes each Specified Amenity delivers into the Auckland region.

Toi Whitiki

Four of the seven Specified Amenities have a direct connection to the desired outcomes outlined in the Auckland Council arts and culture strategic action plan, Toi Whitiki.

Auckland Arts Festival Trust, Auckland Philharmonia, Auckland Theatre Company and New Zealand Opera all undertake activities that, to varying degrees, align with the outcomes stated in the Toi Whitiki document.

While the Funding Board does not impose any conditions on the four amenities related to the specific outcomes detailed in Toi Whitiki, each organisation is nevertheless aware of and undertaking activities consistent with the outcomes stipulated.

Each organisation's individual programmes and outputs must also be balanced against the required outputs and outcomes of other large funding agencies supporting the four organisations, such as Creative New Zealand.

Compliance With Section 14 (Assessment Criteria)

In assessing and considering each annual Funding Application, the Funding Board also monitors each Specified Amenity for compliance with the Assessment Criteria outlined in [section 14 of the Act](#). The board is satisfied that the Specified Amenities adhere to the various assessment criteria related to each.

Funding Principles – Section 21

In addition to checking for compliance with the Assessment Criteria outlined in section 14 of the Act, the Funding Board monitors its adherence to the [Funding Principles](#), where applicable.

Auckland Council

Through the Chair, the Funding Board sustains active engagement with Auckland Council to both understand the Council's current operating environment, and to keep Council updated on the status and activities of the Amenities.

Funding Applications

Under provisions within the Act, the Funding Board must have regard to the Funding Principles when considering a funding application from a Specified Amenity, and Auckland Council must decide whether to approve the recommended levy after also having regard to those Funding Principles.

Each year, the Funding Board requests that Specified Amenities complete an application form (currently in nine parts) seeking comprehensive information about the organisation:

1. Overview of Services
 - a. The Amenity
 - b. Organisational Changes
 - c. Staffing
 - d. Delivering to Auckland Plan 2050
2. Governance
 - a. The Board
 - b. Structure & Management
 - c. Stakeholders & Engagement

- d. External Relationships
3. Risk, including Strategic Risks
4. Performance Targets and Alignment
5. Financial Summary
6. Revenue
7. Expenditure
8. Future Financials
9. Other matters, including Sustainability

Having received applications from the Specified Amenities that wish to be considered for funding, the Funding Board reviews these and seeks any supplementary information it requires. As specified in the Act, the Funding Board Chairperson and an Auckland Council representative meet to confer, before the Draft Funding Plan is publicly notified for submissions over a one-month-plus period. The Funding Board then publicly considers any written and/or oral submissions, makes any modifications to the Funding Plan that it deems appropriate after considering the submissions, then refers the Funding Plan to Auckland Council, seeking approval of the Funding Board's levy recommendation.

The above process involves the provision and review of substantial information about each Specified Amenity. It includes declarations from each that each application complies with the Funding Principles (with any additions) set out in Section 21 of the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act 2008.

In addition to the comprehensive information submitted as part of the annual application by each Specified Amenity, the Funding Board's independent auditors also conduct their own sample checks annually to verify adherence to the Funding Principles. That involves reviewing the entire funding application and subsequent reporting processes for a Specified Amenity over a two-year period.

Considering the above, the Funding Board:

- having considered the information and declarations provided in support of the Specified Amenities' respective funding applications for 2025-2026; and
- having had regard to the Funding Principles as defined in section 21 of the Act; and
- having monitored the activities of the Specified Amenities, against the Assessment Criteria in section 14 of the Act;

is satisfied that the Specified Amenities and the Funding Board are following the Assessment Criteria and Funding Principles contained within the Act.

Allocation of Grants

The Funding Board has undertaken a rigorous examination of the funding applications made by the Specified Amenities and made an allocation of grants for the 2025-2026 financial year.

The table that follows sets out the allocation of grants to each of the Specified Amenities. The Funding Board can impose additional conditions on grants but has not done so for any of the grants for 2025-2026.

Funding applications, trading results of previous financial years, and discussions with the individual Specified Amenities have all contributed to the decision-making process the Funding Board has used in arriving at the grant allocation to each organisation.

The Funding Board is aware that the key purpose of the Act is to provide a mechanism for adequate, sustainable, and secure funding. The Funding Board believes that the funding levels allocated in the 2025-2026 Funding Plan will satisfy that obligation for most amenities.

Grant Allocations to Specified Amenities 2025-2026

Specified Amenity	2024-2025	2025-2026		Annual change	
	Grant Allocation \$	Funding Application \$	Grant Allocation \$	\$	%
Auckland Festival Trust	4,187,000	4,712,000	4,300,000	113,000	2.70%
Auckland Philharmonia Trust	4,900,000	5,096,000	4,998,000	98,000	2.00%
Auckland Theatre Company Limited	2,375,000	2,553,375	2,450,000	75,000	3.16%
New Zealand Opera Limited	1,260,000	1,386,000	1,305,360	45,360	3.60%
Stardome - Auckland Observatory and Planetarium Trust Board	1,570,000	1,617,000	1,617,100	47,100	3.00%
Surf Life Saving Northern Region Incorporated	1,975,000	2,205,000	2,080,000	105,000	5.32%
Watersafe Auckland Incorporated t/a Drowning Prevention Auckland	1,260,000	1,421,444	1,421,444	161,444	12.81%
Total Grants Payable	17,527,000	18,990,819	18,171,904	644,904	3.68%
Funding Board Administration Budget	378,750	378,750	378,750	-	0.00%
Total Grants and Administration	17,905,750	19,369,569	18,550,654	644,904	3.60%
<i>Less paid from Funding Board Retained Earnings</i>	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL Levy payable by Auckland Council	17,905,750	19,369,569	18,550,654	644,904	3.60%

Note: Auckland Regional Helicopter Trust did not submit a funding application for 2024-2025 or 2025-2026.

Notes regarding the Grant Allocations

Watersafe Auckland Incorporated t/a Drowning Prevention Auckland (DPA) +\$161,444

This increase will allow Drowning Prevention Auckland to implement a workforce management system, along with modest salary increases to retain and attract staff. A new Aquatic educator role will grow the reach of DPA's water education programmes into communities that are not currently being served.

Auckland Festival Trust +\$113,000

This is the first increase in funding for Auckland Festival Trust since the 2022-2023 funding year. The Trust is experiencing significant inflationary pressure, along with significant cost increases relating to travel and other operations costs. This amenity returns the largest amount (26% of its grant) back to Auckland Council through venue rents and consents.

Surf Life Saving Northern Region Incorporated +\$105,000

The additional funding will be utilised to sustain the services of paid lifeguards on beaches that are currently serviced by SLSNR.

New Zealand Opera Limited (NZO) +\$45,360

This is the first increase in funding for New Zealand Opera since the 2022-2023 funding year. NZO is experiencing significant inflationary pressure. This amenity returns 8% of its grant back to Auckland Council through venue hire.

Indicative Grant Requests for July 2026 to June 2028

Each year, the Specified Amenities are required to indicate what level of funding they may seek in the subsequent two financial years, i.e., 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 and 1 July 2027 to 30 June 2028. The table below details the indicative figures provided by the Specified Amenities. Funding applications are considered annually, so these indicative figures are subject to change.

Future requests for any significant increases in operational grant funding must have undergone sound, thoroughly worked through and open discussions with the Funding Board and Auckland Council before they are likely to be considered. No automatic increase in grant funding can be assumed by the Specified Amenities.

Specified Amenity	Indicative Grant Request	
	2026-2027 \$	2027-2028 \$
Auckland Festival Trust	4,947,600	5,194,980
Auckland Philharmonia Trust	5,226,046	5,371,697
Auckland Theatre Company Limited	2,617,209	2,682,640
New Zealand Opera Limited	1,480,010	1,509,610
Stardome - Auckland Observatory and Planetarium Trust Board	1,666,000	1,708,000
Surf Life Saving Northern Region Incorporated	2,360,000	2,525,000
Watersafe Auckland Incorporated t/a Drowning Prevention Auckland	1,585,945	1,761,961
Total	19,882,810	20,753,888

Funding Levy

The maximum levy that can be charged for 2025-2026 and future financial years is specified in section 34(1)(c) of the Act, which is:

“...the amount equal to 2% of the revenue from rates of the Auckland Council in the previous financial year.”

The total maximum levy for 2025-2026 has been calculated as \$50,680,000. This is based on the annual rates revenue, which is stated as \$2534 million in Auckland Council’s 2024 Annual Report.

For 2025-2026, the Funding Board is seeking a gross levy of \$18,550,654 (36.60% of the maximum) to be apportioned as follows:

	2025-2026 \$	2024-2025 \$
Allocated to seven Specified Amenities	18,171,904	17,527,000
Administration costs	378,750	378,750
Net Levy Payable by Auckland Council	18,550,654	17,905,750

The levy payable in 2024-2025 in respect of grants to seven amenities was \$17,527,000. The grants in 2025-2026 to seven Specified Amenities total \$18,171,904, representing an overall change of +\$644,904, or 3.68%.

The levy is payable to the Funding Board by Auckland Council in full on 1 July 2025. The levy will be distributed as grants to the Specified Amenities no later than 15 August 2025.

For subsequent years, the indicative levy requirement has been assessed as:

2026-2027 - \$18,920,000

2027-2028 - \$19,300,000

The setting of the levies in future years will follow the guidelines prescribed in section 34 of the Act.

The Inland Revenue Department has determined that the portion of levy collected and distributed to the Specified Amenities as grants (\$18,171,904) is not subject to GST. That portion of the levy collected for administration costs (\$378,750) is subject to the normal rules applying to the supply of goods and services. It is therefore subject to GST.

Auckland Council provides other services to the Funding Board from time to time. The Funding Board will make full reimbursement as required and pay for services as agreed. For example, the honoraria payable to board members are managed and paid through the Auckland Council payroll system. The Funding Board will fully reimburse Auckland Council for these, and any other costs incurred on behalf of the Funding Board.

The Board

The Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Board was established by the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act 2008. The members of the Funding Board are selected and appointed by Auckland Council and the Amenities Board for three-year terms in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Act.

The current members of the Funding Board are:

Member	Appointed	Term of Office Expires	
		30 June 2027	30 June 2026
Ms Victoria Carter - Chairperson	2017		•
Ms Paula Browning – Deputy Chair	2019	•	
Mr Scott Pearson	2018	•	
Mr Alastair Carruthers	2021	•	
Mr Paul Evans	2023		•
Ms Penelope Peebles	2023		•
Mr Jonny Gritt	2023	•	
Mr Ravi Nyayapati	2023		•
Mrs Linda Cooper	2023		•
Mrs Moana Tamaariki-Pohe	2022		•

Ms Victoria Carter was appointed as the Chairperson, and Ms Paula Browning as the Deputy Chair for the 2024-2025 year. Appointments to these positions for 2025-2026 will occur in the second quarter of 2025.

Funding Board Remuneration

Funding Board Members

Auckland Council did not approve the proposed increase to rates of remuneration for funding board members for the year commencing 1 July 2025. The rates of remuneration for 2025-2026 remain the same as for the 2024 year are as follows:

Financial year	2025-2026		2024-2025		Change	
Position	EACH	TOTAL	EACH	TOTAL	EACH	TOTAL
Members (8)	\$18,500	\$148,000	\$18,500	\$148,000	\$0	\$0
Deputy Chair	\$27,750	\$27,750	\$27,750	\$27,750	\$0	\$0
Chair	\$37,000	\$37,000	\$37,000	\$37,000	\$0	\$0

Advisory Officer

The Funding Board contracted an Advisory Officer for 2024-2025. No arrangements have been entered into regarding the continuation of the Advisory Officer role for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 or subsequent periods.

The Funding Board may consider further contracting the current Advisory Officer for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. The total remuneration for 2025-2026 has been budgeted as \$40,000, along with \$15,500 for external accounting services that were previously a component of the Advisory Officer role.

Administration

The Funding Plan must disclose the maximum amount of the Funding Board's reasonable administrative costs.

For the 2025-2026 financial year, the expected administrative costs are \$378,750.

The administrative costs cover the Board Member remuneration (honoraria), Advisory Officer fees, and all other administrative costs as detailed below. The Administration expenses include software subscriptions, advertising, meeting expenses, and ancillary expenses.

The board currently holds sufficient retained earnings to cover any unbudgeted items of expenditure should these arise.

Budget year	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
Income for Administrative costs				
Levies for Administrative costs	\$378,750	\$378,750	\$388,850	\$400,550
Total Income	\$378,750	\$378,750	\$388,850	\$400,550
Administrative Costs				
Audit fees	\$11,500	\$12,000	\$12,500	\$13,000
Legal fees	\$38,000	\$39,000	\$40,000	\$41,000
Accounting Services		\$15,500	\$16,000	\$16,500
Advisory Officer	\$68,000	\$40,000	\$41,200	\$42,500
Consultants	\$36,000	\$37,000	\$38,000	\$39,000
Board member honoraria	\$212,750	\$221,850	\$228,650	\$235,550
Administration expenses	\$12,500	\$13,400	\$12,500	\$13,000
Total Administrative Costs	\$378,750	\$378,750	\$388,850	\$400,550
Net Surplus / Deficit funded from retained earnings	-	-	-	-

Introducing the Amenities

The Specified Amenities funded under the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act 2008 provide a wide range of experiences and services to people across the greater Auckland region each year.

Each of the seven Specified Amenities that the Funding Board intends to provide grants to in 2025-2026 have prepared a brief outline regarding the activities it plans to undertake during that period.

When submitting their annual funding application, the Specified Amenities provide comprehensive information to the Funding Board to substantiate the funding requests, including supplying sufficient information to satisfy the requirements of the relevant Funding Principles, noting that not all the Funding Principles relate to all the Specified Amenities, e.g. not all Specified Amenities have libraries or collections (section 21(e) of the Act).

All the Specified Amenities are required to, and have, illustrated alignment to the objectives of the Auckland Plan (where relevant) and prepared performance measures against which to measure their progress. As noted elsewhere, grant allocations received via the annual Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Plan process only form a proportion of a Specified Amenity's overall funding, so the Specified Amenities must also consider the expectations and requirements of other funders when determining all their outputs and outcomes.

The commentaries on the following pages regarding the plans and aspirations of the organisations are taken directly from the information provided by each of the seven Specified Amenities that sought funding for the 2025-2026 funding year.

Auckland Festival Trust

See the Auckland Arts Festival website for more: www.aaf.co.nz

Festival Vision – Te Pae Tawhiti Auckland Arts Festival: a leading world class international arts festival, celebrating Auckland’s rich and varied communities, people, audiences and cultures, which we reflect by commissioning new, New Zealand work; presenting international work and promoting the social, cultural and economic well-being of Auckland during the Festival and throughout the year.

Te Ahurei Toi o Tāmaki Makaurau: he manutaki ahurei toi i te ao whānui, e whakanui nei i ngā iwi o Tāmaki Makaurau, ā rātou tikanga, me te whakatairanga i ngā tokonga hapori, ngā mahi ā-iwi, me te oranga ohaoha o Tāmaki Makaurau hoki

Nature and scope

1. Curating and presenting a leading annual international festival of arts in Auckland
2. Create, produce, stage and promote world-class diverse work
3. Engage, Entertain, Enrich and Inspire Diverse Auckland
4. Providing arts leadership and championing the arts

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

Auckland Festival Trust (AFT) produces and presents a world-class arts festival that engages Aucklanders in the arts, their communities and their city. The Auckland Arts Festival (AAF) programme reflects Auckland’s diversity, reaches across the entire Auckland region, and builds future audiences for the arts. As a major commissioner of new Aotearoa/NZ work and a significant arts employer AFT supports Auckland/NZ artists and arts practitioners with a focus on developing and staging Māori, Pasifika and NZ Asian work. Since 2003 AAF has entertained more than 2.2 million people enhancing the liveability and vibrancy of the city and increasing Auckland’s standing as a major (and growing) international cultural destination. AFT/AAF has a strong commitment to tikanga Māori and the broad diverse ethnicities of Tāmaki Makaurau, delivering programmes that ensure greater access for all Aucklanders.

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

Auckland Arts Festival’s activities strongly align with the Belonging and Participation Outcome, and increasingly with the Māori Identity and Wellbeing outcome through programming to showcase Auckland’s Māori Identity and vibrant Māori Culture.

AAF makes a significant contribution to Auckland in terms of vibrancy, social well-being and potential economic benefit and delivers to the above outcome in the Auckland Plan where all Aucklanders will be part of and contribute to society, access opportunities, and have the chance to develop to their full potential.

Auckland Philharmonia Trust

See the Auckland Philharmonia website for more: aucklandphil.nz

Vision: To be the musical heart of Auckland and its communities

Mission: To inspire a lifelong love of orchestral music

Nature and scope

Auckland Philharmonia performs more than 70 concerts and events throughout the year. Equally important is our community and outreach work.

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

The Auckland Philharmonia provides enriching orchestral experiences for a broad range of demographics from across Auckland throughout the year. At our core, we present orchestral performances on our mainstage at the Town Hall—from some of the greatest masterworks from across the ages to film scores with live orchestra to premieres by New Zealand composers to featuring Aotearoa’s up and coming contemporary pop talent—we offer a broad and dynamic range of musical experiences for all Aucklanders to enjoy.

In addition to our performances, our work engaging students, teachers, and community members outside the Town Hall is a critical element of our community impact. Through our Learn & Participate programme, we reach over 25,000 Aucklanders both in person and through digital education services.

With an emphasis on serving areas of Auckland in most need, our work in South and West Auckland ensures that the benefits of music education and community music participation are felt by New Zealanders from diverse financial and cultural demographics.

In parallel with our artistic and community engagement output, as an anchor arts institution in Tāmaki Makaurau with over 100 full-time artists and creative workers employed, the Auckland Philharmonia is a major contributor to ensuring a strong and vibrant workforce, providing employment for both local talent and attracting international labour from all over the world.

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

In addition to our programme delivering against many of the monitoring frameworks provided in the Auckland Plan, we believe our core offering best aligns with Focus Area 7: Recognise the Value of Arts, Culture, Sport and Recreation to Quality of Life, of the Belonging and Participation outcome. Across our varied portfolio, we are:

- Supporting a range of arts, culture and heritage activities that reflect Auckland’s diversity.
- Providing a range of arts culture and heritage experiences that Aucklanders can enjoy.
- Integrating arts and culture as part of our everyday lives.
- Providing innovative and flexible options to meet the changing lifestyles of all Aucklanders
- including programmes for older and disabled people.
- Continuing to build the sector’s capability to deliver quality recreation and sport experiences.

Auckland Theatre Company Limited

See the Auckland Theatre Company website for more: www.atc.co.nz

Purpose: Powerful storytelling that connects communities and enriches lives.

Nature and scope

1. Producing theatre of scale and ambition, presenting outstanding New Zealand and international work that thrills audiences and builds community.
2. Develop new work by New Zealand theatre artists, reflecting the community we are part of and nurturing the next generation of New Zealand playwrights.
3. Inspiring and engaging young people, creating accessible programmes that young people can participate in through school and independently.
4. Provide leadership for our sector, offering professional development, supporting the development of actors, creatives and crews.
5. Programme ASB Waterfront Theatre to fulfil its potential as a cultural asset for the benefit of Aucklanders.

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

Auckland Theatre Company (ATC)'s annual programmes contribute to a vibrant arts and culture scene and contributes to the visitor economy. Participation in the arts has positive effects on wellbeing, enhances self-confidence and resilience, and decreases anxiety. ATC offers opportunities for people to engage with live performing arts in the theatre, at school, and in community settings through open access programmes. We make ourselves as accessible as possible. ATC also:

- Manages the ASB Waterfront Theatre, an essential community amenity for the Auckland region
- Employs local actors, creatives and production personnel contributing to the sustainability of the theatre sector in Auckland
- Makes its resources available to the performing arts sector, which supports other arts and culture organisation to produce and present their own work increasing the diversity of arts opportunities.

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

Auckland Theatre Company contributes to the outcomes of the Auckland Plan 2050:

Belonging and Participation: a programme that endeavours to reflect Auckland of today, including works representing diverse communities, and a range of options for Aucklanders to access performances and activities.

Māori Identity and Wellbeing: Committed to centring te Tiriti o Waitangi in all that we do, as we work towards our ambition of being a genuine partner

Environment and Cultural Heritage: Investing in uniquely New Zealand stories, and ensuring the ASB Waterfront Theatre is available for the wider arts community

Opportunity and Prosperity: Employment for up to 200 Auckland-based actors and creatives each year.

New Zealand Opera Limited

See the New Zealand Opera website for more: nzopera.com

Purpose: Telling stories through the power of the human singing voice, New Zealand Opera exists to serve our communities, our artists, and our artform.

Nature and scope

New Zealand Opera is an arts company, based in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland that presents and performs opera. Our extensive programme in Auckland includes mainstage opera seasons with full orchestral accompaniment, smaller scale concert performances, new commissions, festival collaborations and site-specific opera productions.

Our community is our driving focus and we continue to deepen our connections through outreach activities such as our Opera in Schools tour, by Māori for Māori projects, free community performances, student workshops, low-price tickets for schoolchildren and pre-performance talks. The ‘total theatre’ nature of our work nourishes and nurtures many branches of the creative ecosystem in Auckland from performers and creatives to technical, production and construction. We hold a leadership position within the sector: providing training opportunities for the next generation of singers, répétiteurs, directors and designers, and offering resources and mentorship to smaller project-based companies.

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

New Zealand Opera is at the centre of Auckland’s arts scene, integral to Auckland’s status as a UNESCO City of Music. The Company’s work in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland helps cement this city’s reputation as a culturally rich and creative place to live, work and visit. New Zealand Opera’s presence here also helps sustain a skilled creative and technical workforce in the city, providing contracts for independent practitioners. Our Strategic Agenda places great emphasis on proactively connecting Aucklanders with programmes that enhance wellbeing, resilience and positive mental health outcomes. This is seen through our community and education work which encourages participation and engagement with the arts.

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

New Zealand Opera’s Strategic Agenda and its activities are well aligned to the Auckland Plan’s objectives and we already contribute to a number of the plan’s outcomes, directions and focus areas.

Auckland Plan 2050’s overall aim is to ensure that Auckland can continue to be a place where people want to live, work and visit. We contribute to this in a number of ways by providing programmes for Tāmaki Makaurau to enjoy, hiring a large workforce of contractors in Auckland as well as encouraging travel into the city centre, contributing to the economy. NZ Opera’s ambition is to extend its audience reach and engagement, connect people with opera, embed tuakiri Māori (Māori identity) into our organisation, engage with Pasifika arts, strengthen our focus on diversity, and to produce opera in a way that reflects the time and place we live in.



Stardome - Auckland Observatory and Planetarium Trust

See the Stardome website for more: www.stardome.org.nz

Purpose: Standing on this whenua, we enable our visitors to explore the interconnections between people, their globe and the cosmos – through multiple lenses.

Nature and scope

Stardome operates primarily from an observatory and planetarium located on Maungakiekie, Tamaki Makaurau. It operates a range of services, including a number of education programmes for schools, preschools and tertiary students. Stardome is also open to the general public, offering evening and weekend programmes and telescope viewing. Stardome volunteers also carry out astronomical research in collaboration with international research partners.

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

Stardome is an integral part of the mix of cultural institutions across Auckland. Most large cities across the world have an observatory and planetarium as part of the cultural landscape. Auckland is particularly fortunate to have both a state-of-the-art planetarium and an observatory in one location, where members of the public can connect to our night sky.

Education is a vital part of Stardome's operation. Approximately 60% of our visitors are tamariki, most coming to Stardome with their school. Stardome's equity initiative has made our education programmes accessible to a wide range of young people who might not otherwise be able to visit and experience the night sky.

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

The most significant ways that Stardome contributes to the outcomes of the Auckland Plan 2050 are:

Belonging and Participation: Through keeping our entry costs affordable, our Equity programme, and digital content we provide access to our facility for as wide a range of Aucklanders as possible.

Māori Identify and Wellbeing: The most significant contribution Stardome makes to this outcome is in its requirement to uphold the mana of Maungakiekie as a leaseholder under the Tūpuna Maunga Authority and acting as good Treaty partners.

Environment and Cultural Heritage: As one of the cultural heritage facilities across Tāmaki Makaurau, we contribute significantly to Aucklanders' access to stories of our night sky, enriching their knowledge and interest in all forms of cosmology.

Opportunity and prosperity: Stardome makes a contribution to opportunity and prosperity for Aucklanders by providing access to a significant telescope and planetarium with which to view the night sky of Tāmaki Makaurau.

Surf Life Saving Northern Region Incorporated

See the Surf Life Saving Northern Region website for more: lifesaving.org.nz

Purpose: Ensure safe beach experiences for our communities through the provision of lifesaving services, beach education, and coastal aquatic rescue.

Nature and scope

Surf Life Saving Northern Region (SLSNR) plays a central role in leading, coordinating, and supporting our member volunteer surf lifesaving organisations. Our services encompass beach safety, patrolling, patrol management, search and rescue, emergency response, public education, and sport and recreation activities. We also offer professional shared services to member clubs and collaborate with external stakeholders to negotiate current and future service delivery in consultation with clubs. Our services are all directed towards outcomes that reduce drowning and injuries on Auckland's beaches:

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

SLSNR's commitment to beach safety and drowning prevention directly contributes to the well-being of Auckland's residents and visitors. By maintaining a high level of safety along the coastline, we play a pivotal role in reducing the potential for harm and emergencies. This, in turn, enhances the overall well-being of individuals and families who can enjoy our beautiful beaches with confidence.

Our services also promote the vibrancy and attractiveness of Auckland as a place to live and visit. Safe beaches are a major draw for residents and tourists alike. By offering educational programs, supporting recreational activities, and fostering a sense of community engagement through our volunteer opportunities, we actively contribute to the vitality of Auckland. Our efforts make Auckland's beaches more inviting, which in turn bolsters the region's reputation as a desirable place to reside and explore.

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

Belonging and Participation: The coastline and beaches are Auckland's favourite recreational environment, particularly in the summer and at weekends. The coastlines we patrol provide an ideal environment for recreation for Auckland and its visitors, with our beaches being used in varying ways and available to all communities. SLSNR Clubs provide both safe enjoyment of our beaches, and opportunities for participation in a diverse, inclusive, lifesaving movement that has a vibrant volunteer culture. Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. We aim to maximize the potential and efficiency of our volunteers to enable them to serve better the community who support them. The experience and training that our volunteers gain as leaders, lifeguards and in surf sports are channelled back into the community in a significant number of other sports.

Environment and Cultural Heritage: Adapt to a changing water future: SLSNR is an active partner in Auckland Council's Safeswim initiative ensuring we work to educate the public on water quality outcomes. Additionally, we continue to work closely with Auckland Council in the redevelopment of our lifesaving facilities to advocate for outcomes and future build locations aligned with sound coastal management principles.

Watersafe Auckland Incorporated t/a Drowning Prevention Auckland

See the Drowning Prevention Auckland website for more: www.dpanz.org.nz

Purpose: Help prevent drowning across the Auckland region, through the provision of world-class education that is informed by our research.

Nature and scope

DPA provides drowning prevention education through six areas of focus:

1. Impactful education programmes
2. Culturally appropriate drowning prevention programmes
3. Professional learning and development
4. Evidence based research
5. Effective advocacy
6. Marketing and Communications: Water safety and drowning prevention awareness and advocacy

Contribution to the purposes of the Act

Contribute: to the well-being of the region; and towards making Auckland a vibrant and attractive place to live in and visit.

Drowning Prevention Auckland (DPA)'s services contribute to regional well-being by working closely with those who educate our children, those who work in our rapidly changing communities, those who contribute to our economic well-being, and collaboration with other organisations that provide search and rescue operations to prevent drowning incidents.

We aim to educate to change the behaviours of Aucklanders to improve mental, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing and we do this by educating Aucklanders to be safe in, on and around the water. By improving behaviours around water, we aim to reduce the total number of drowning incidents, both fatal and non-fatal, and therefore reduce the cost to society, which is currently \$3.5 million on average per one fatal drowning, and \$390,000 per person for serious injury resulting from non-fatal drowning (ACC, 2022).

Alignment to the Auckland Plan 2050

Belonging and Participation: DPA has multiple pathways for the youth and adults of Auckland to gain experience and employment within the Aquatics industry. We also offer Aucklanders a better understanding of the aquatic environment for a better quality of life and experiences in, on and around the waterways of Auckland. Our new settler programmes provide a strong connection to community and participation in healthy activity.

Māori Identity and Wellbeing: DPA has numerous programmes specifically for Māori designed by Māori to help Māori to safely enjoy traditional activities such as RUKU Kai Gathering and Waka Ama.

Opportunity and Prosperity: DPA offers education and employment opportunities to all Aucklanders. With more water safety education, Aucklanders are better able to safely enjoy the many waterways around Auckland and increase their quality of life.

Decisions following the Submissions Process for the 2025-2026 Funding Plan

The Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Board published the Draft 2025-2026 Funding Plan on 4 December 2024, seeking submissions on the Draft Plan, including the proposed grant allocations for 2025-2026. The Submission period closed on 4 February 2025.

The Funding Board met on 11 February 2025 to consider oral and written submissions. The submissions related to:

- a) Expressing gratitude for, and highlighting the benefits of, the ongoing support provided by the Funding Board to the Specified Amenities
- b) Seeking additional funding for Auckland Theatre Company and New Zealand Opera.

The Funding Board:

- Noted the feedback from submitters regarding the benefits this funding continues to bring to the seven Specified Amenities, to Aucklanders and to Auckland.
- Did not approve increased funding for Auckland Theatre Company. The Funding Board will continue to engage with Auckland Theatre Company and Auckland Council to work on a solution to address Auckland Theatre Company's funding issues.
- Approved a modest increase in funding for New Zealand Opera, noting that this would represent the first funding increase for this amenity since the 2022-2023 funding year.

Directory of Specified Amenities and Associated/Related Entities

Organisation	Balance Date	Charities Registration Number www.charities.govt.nz	Website
Auckland Festival Trust	30 June	CC22145 The Auckland Festival Trust	www.aaf.co.nz
Auckland Philharmonia Trust	31 Dec	CC23611 Auckland Philharmonia Trust CC23607 Auckland Philharmonia Foundation	aucklandphil.nz
Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust	30 June	CC21935 Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust CC46529 Auckland Rescue Helicopter (Capital) Trust - <i>deregistered 30/05/24</i> CC59462 Northern Rescue Helicopter Limited	www.rescuehelicopter.org.nz
Auckland Theatre Company Limited	31 Dec	CC23655 Auckland Theatre Company Limited CC23658 The Theatre Foundation CC48094 The Waterfront Theatre Trust CC50332 Waterfront Theatre Limited	www.atc.co.nz
New Zealand Opera Limited	31 Dec	CC22724 New Zealand Opera Limited CC51542 New Zealand Opera Holdings Trust	nzopera.com
Auckland Observatory and Planetarium Trust Board	30 June	CC20451 Auckland Observatory and Planetarium Trust Board	www.stardome.org.nz
Surf Life Saving Northern Region Incorporated	30 June	CC21256 Surf Life Saving Northern Region Incorporated CC23043 Northern Lifeguard Services Trust CC53628 The Lifesavers Foundation	lifesaving.org.nz
WaterSafe Auckland Incorporated (Drowning Prevention Auckland)	30 June	CC11454 WaterSafe Auckland Incorporated	www.dpanz.org.nz

All these organisations are registered with the Department of Internal Affairs – Charities Services (Ngā Rātonga Kaupapa Atawhai) and details for each amenity are available online at www.charities.govt.nz.

Directory

Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Board

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arafb.info@gmail.com

www.arafb.org.nz

Chairperson: Victoria Carter ONZM

Deputy Chair: Paula Browning

Directors: Alastair Carruthers CNZM
Linda Cooper MNZM
Paul Evans
Jonny Gritt
Ravi Nyayapati
Scott Pearson
Penelope Peebles
Moana Tamaariki-Pohe MNZM

Advisory Officer: Bree Torkington

Bankers: ASB Bank Ltd

Lawyers: Buddle Findlay

Auditors: Office of Auditor-General/Audit New Zealand

Charities Number: CC38181

Relevant Legislation: Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act 2008 (and amendments)

April 2025