

Impact & Outcomes

Humanities, Arts and
Social Sciences in
Aotearoa New Zealand

May 2024

dassh Promoting the
Arts, Social Sciences
and Humanities

Direct Economic Value

The humanities, arts and social sciences deliver direct economic benefit to the Aotearoa New Zealand economy and bring with them huge social benefits.

Graduates of Arts Degrees go into a long list of exciting and diverse careers, all of which have an important role to play in a healthy, happy, well-informed democracy.

Top occupations for Arts graduates include:

Policy analysis **Communications** **Journalism**
Film, television, radio and stage **Galleries and museums**
Visual arts **Performing arts**

Half of the last 10 New Zealand Prime Ministers have had an Arts Degree and half of all current Ministers have one too.

The creative arts industries also generate millions of dollars in revenue every year and provide jobs for thousands of New Zealanders. In 2017, the screen industry generated **\$3.5 billion** in revenue and provided jobs for **16,200** people, many of whom are Arts graduates.

Researchers in the humanities, arts and social sciences improve agricultural productivity, build resilience to natural disasters, support those living with dementia, provide financial guidance to elderly New Zealanders and help revitalise endangered languages.

The humanities, arts and social sciences also have wide ranging social and cultural impacts. For example, **78 per cent** of Māori believe that Ngā Toi Māori (Māori culture, creativity and the arts) are an important way of connecting with their culture and identity.

This report, and the accompanying report on Australia, provides a snapshot of some of the key avenues through which the humanities, arts and social sciences contribute to New Zealand life.

As turbulent events unfold across the globe and trust in institutions including the media, academia and government are falling, the arts, social sciences and humanities are core to a healthy, happy, creative and economically viable Aotearoa New Zealand.

About DASSH

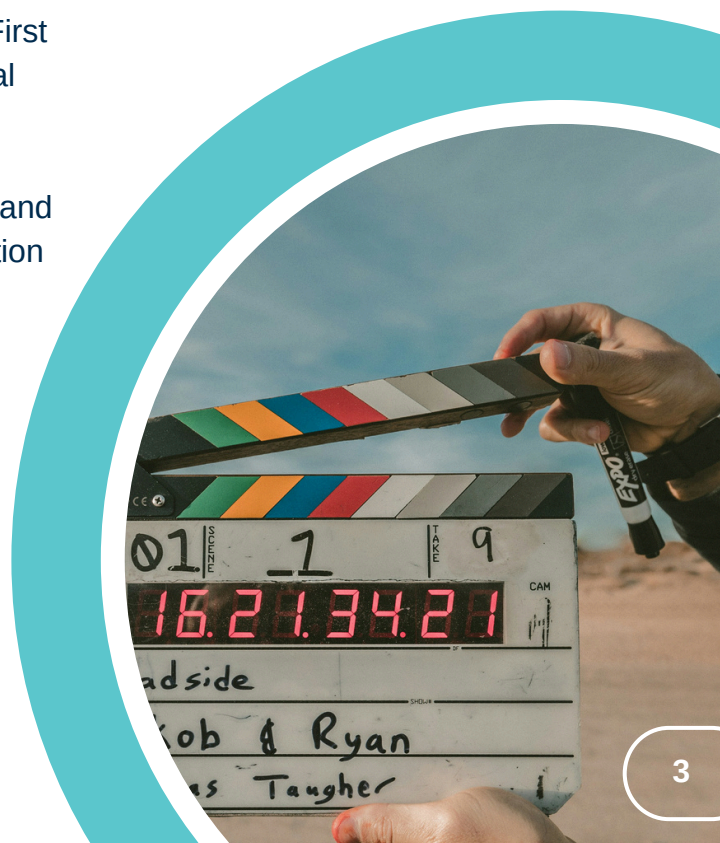
The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities represents more than 250 Deans and Associate and Deputy Deans from nearly every university in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Our members lead schools that are home to more than 100,000 students and thousands of researchers in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities.

We advocate for our disciplines, produce research and policy submissions, and engage with government, members and colleagues in Australia and around the world. DASSH is a hub for members, with networking and professional development events held throughout the year.

Acknowledgement of First Nations

The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities proudly acknowledges First Nations people as the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We acknowledge the powerful opportunity our sector has to embrace, learn from and improve through better understanding and integration of Indigenous Knowledges.

All images courtesy of Unsplash



Here are some industries with great economic outcomes driven by Arts graduates

Screen industry

\$3.5 billion

Revenue generated by the screen industry in 2017

16,200

The number of people employed in the screen industry in 2017

\$771.8 million

The additional tourist receipts generated by the Hobbit Trilogy in 2013-14

214,811

The number of additional international tourists as a result of the Hobbit Trilogy in 2013-14

Sources: Stats NZ. (2019). *Screen Industry: 2017/18*; Li, S., H. Li, H. Song, C. Lundberg, and S. Shen. (2016). *The Economic Impact of On-Screen Tourism: The Case of The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit*; PWC. (2023). *Economic Contribution of the New Zealand Music Industry in 2021 and 2022*; McLean G. (2023). *Festival of Lights Pumps \$8.3 Million Into Taranaki Economy*; Scoop. (2023). *Events Give Life to Auckland's Economy With \$40+ Million Boost Over Summer*.

The screen industry is one of the largest industries in Aotearoa New Zealand, providing jobs for thousands of New Zealanders. Those with arts and communication backgrounds make up a significant number of screen-related jobs.

The music industry also makes a considerable contribution to the Aotearoa New Zealand economy. A number of music festivals are held in New Zealand. These festivals attract thousands of visitors and inject millions of dollars into local communities.

Music industry

\$350 million

Revenue generated by the music industry in 2022, 33 per cent of which came from NZ-generated content

2,250

The number of full-time equivalent jobs in the music industry in 2022

\$6.1 million

Contribution of the WOMAD music, arts and dance festival to the Taranaki economy in 2020

36,000

Number of visitors to the Pasifika Festival in 2023

Graduate outcomes

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report found that analytical thinking and creative thinking were the most important skills for workers in 2023. These types of cognitive skills are becoming increasingly important and are central to the humanities, arts and social sciences.

Universities New Zealand data, based on data from the 2018 Census, shows Arts graduates go into all sorts of jobs and have great outcomes.

This is how much more these graduates earn on top of an average school leaver's salary across their lifetime:

\$1,359,880

Political Science and Policy Studies

\$949,794

Communication and Media Studies

\$947,984

Studies in Human Society

\$602,765

Graphic and Design Studies

\$416,960

Creative Arts not further defined

Some of the top occupations for humanities, arts and social sciences graduates include:

- Teachers
- Graphic designers
- Actors
- Musicians
- Marketing professionals
- Policy analysts
- Artists
- Photographers
- Illustrators
- Journalists
- Editors
- Film editors
- Social workers
- Intelligence officers

An Arts degree sets students up for diverse and rewarding careers



Meg de Ronde, Chief Executive of the Human Rights Commission

Currently I am the Tatau Uruora, Chief Executive at Te Kāhui Tika Tangata, Human Rights Commission. It's a unique role in Aotearoa New Zealand and I'm sure the experience I had with my arts degree was really valuable. My career hasn't been linear and I think that's a crucial element actually, of an arts degree. Picking this degree isn't a clear path into a set workplace, it's a set of skills and approaches that enable you to adapt to a range of professions. My degree majored in Political Studies and English Literature with a strong focus on history. I learned how to consider problems, analyse society, assemble evidence, value creativity and consider international contexts. Being able to challenge my own thinking has enabled a career where I can work with and learn from lots of different types of people. Where collectively we can investigate human rights abuses and progress a world that is more just and equitable.

**Bachelor and
Master of Arts
(Political Studies)**



Michal Garvey, Founder and Director of Foodprint

Founding an app that fights food waste isn't exactly where I saw my career going while studying towards an Arts degree with double majors in Māori Studies and Political Science. When I was at university, smartphones didn't even exist, let alone apps as we know them today. My Arts degree helped make me an effective communicator and gave me the ability to think creatively. Both of which are important as a Founder and CEO. I run an app called Foodprint, where you can purchase surplus food for a discount to prevent it from going to waste. My Degree helped me get the jobs that I had before starting Foodprint. Sometimes there were aspects of my degree that were directly relevant to the job, other times the hiring managers wanted to know just that I had completed one. An Arts degree is a great way to set yourself up with broad future career opportunities.

**Bachelor of Arts
(Māori Studies
and Political
Science)**



Lesieli Oliver, Founder and Chief Visionary Officer of Lālanga

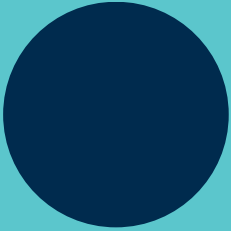
Lesieli's university degree has propelled her on a remarkable journey, one deeply intertwined with her personal values and professional aspirations. While her initial trajectory seemed destined for a political career, she discovered a deeper calling that merged her expertise in digital technologies with her passion for education and leadership. Recognising chronic challenges in New Zealand's education system—such as student attendance, engagement, achievement, and wellbeing—Lesieli founded the Lālanga ToolBox as a solution-driven initiative. Aligned with the NZ curriculum, this toolbox empowers school leaders and teachers with culturally relevant learning content, aiming to engage and inspire New Zealand's youth to achieve and succeed.

**Bachelor of Arts
(Political Studies)**



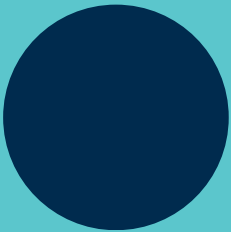
Hobbiton Movie Set

There are some great examples of arts, social sciences and humanities research changing the way we live...



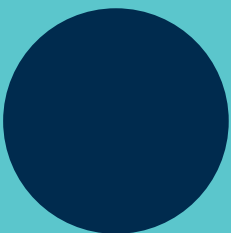
MaaraTech

This interdisciplinary project, with input from the social sciences, aims to improve productivity in the fruit growing sector through the development of human-assist and automation technologies.



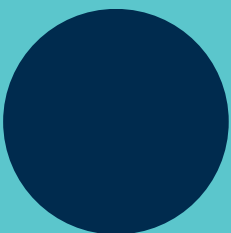
QuakeCoRE

Social scientists within the Centre of Research Excellence QuakeCoRE are working with an interdisciplinary team to find ways of building earthquake resilience.



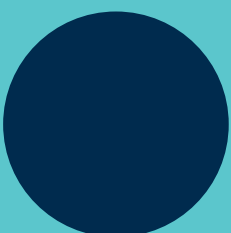
MeDArT

Artist and founder of MeDArT Associate Professor Emma Febvre-Richards is leading a team experimenting with the use of art as a tool to improve communication and wellbeing among those living with dementia.



Finding the Best Fit

Led by sociologist Dr Kay Saville-Smith, this project aims to improve older people's financial literacy and optimise the use of their housing assets.



Te Whare o Rongomaaurikura – Centre for Language Revitalisation

The Centre for Language Revitalisation, including researchers from the humanities, arts and social sciences, supports the revitalisation of Indigenous and endangered languages.

Although the humanities, arts and social sciences make important contributions to the New Zealand economy, they also deliver huge social and cultural value.

The arts have an important role to play in terms of improving **wellbeing** and in fostering **connection** to one's culture and community.

The humanities, arts and social sciences foster **creativity** and **curiosity** within graduates and teaches them the skills to **think critically** and deal with complex issues and information.

Graduates in these fields also have the skills to seek out and interpret different types of information.

The humanities, arts and social sciences thus offers benefits to society through a **well-informed** and **open-minded** citizenry.

Creative New Zealand's 2023 New Zealanders and the Arts survey captures the social and cultural value of the arts:

80 per cent of young New Zealanders feel good or excellent when they do creative things

78 per cent of Māori believe that Ngā Toi Māori (Māori culture, creativity and the arts) are an important way of connecting with their culture and identity

63 per cent of New Zealanders believe that the arts help define who they are as New Zealanders

63 per cent of New Zealanders believe the arts are good for their mental health and wellbeing