

## **Spada Submission on Vocational Education Reforms Consultation**

**Thursday 12 September 2024**

### ***Background***

Established in 1982, Screen Producers New Zealand (Spada) is a non-profit, membership-based organization representing key producers and production companies in the New Zealand screen industry.

Spada's membership includes emerging producers as well as larger production companies, but most of its members are small to medium-sized enterprises, reflecting the makeup of the industry in New Zealand.

Spada plays a crucial role in advising the government and key stakeholders on policies affecting the screen industry. It ensures that the government is well-informed about industry matters and provides guidance when needed. This includes offering input on proposed or existing New Zealand screen production incentives, co-production treaties, trans-Pacific negotiations, government agency arrangements, policy and regulatory frameworks (such as media regulation), and public service broadcasting.

### ***Submission***

Spada welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Government's latest proposed reforms on three parts of the Vocational Education system.

Spada has engaged with the Reform of Vocational Education throughout the entire process including cross-sector hui in-person and online, submissions on reports and recommendations, and direct meetings with Toi Mai Workforce Development Council.

As a \$3.2 billion per annum sector, Spada warmly welcomed the opportunity, provided through the creation of Toi Mai, for our industry to have input into its own training and education.

In responding to the current proposals for Vocational Education in the Tertiary sector Spada advocates and underscores the:

- Need for industry input into the design, development and delivery of all tertiary training for the screen sector.
- Importance and value of Spada's, and the screen sector's relationship with Toi Mai and the work it has done to date; and recommends that this valuable institutional knowledge is retained and continues to be built upon.
- Value of Toi Mai's understanding of the value chain and workings of the screen industry, which is predominantly a sole trader model; its invaluable

data; and the insights and its sector-wide supported recommendations on how best to plan and implement training across the industry.

Spada also supports an amendment to the current proposals for the redesign of the VET system with the Government to create New Zealand Jobs and Skills Councils to align with Australia's approach and existing WDC industry groupings.

**Spada's direct responses to the consultation document are as follows:**

***Questions 7 - 13.***

Spada (Screen Producers New Zealand) is a nationwide screen industry organisation operating in both urban and rural regions and best represented by the category 'Creative Industries'

**Proposal 1: Creating a healthy ITP network that responds to regional needs**

***11. Do you agree with the consultation document's statements on the importance of ITPs?***

Disagree

This model is a focus on education as a business, rather than a tool to empower learners and industry alike and contribute to the cultural and economic growth of Aotearoa New Zealand. In the screen sector there has been a lack of cohesion and connection between what is being taught and delivered by ITPs and what is happening on the ground across the sector.

Spada supports Toi Mai's recommendation that the Government create New Zealand Jobs and Skills Councils to align with Australia's approach, and existing WDC industry groupings.

***12. What do you consider to be the main benefits and risks of reconfiguring the ITP sector?***

ITPs have not traditionally served the screen sector well, or the arts in general, and nothing in the model for Proposal 1 suggests that learners and the screen industry will benefit from the importance of the institutions over industry and learners.

***13. Do you support creating a federation model for some ITPs?***

Disagree.

*Why / Why not?*

Spada does not support Proposal 1 – see response to Question 11.

**14. What are the minimum programmes and roles that need to be delivered by the new ITP sector for your region?**

Spada does not support Proposal 1 – see response to Question 11.

**15. What are the critical factors needed (including functions and governance arrangements) to best support a federation model?**

Spada does not support Proposal 1 – see response to Question 11.

Spada supports Toi Mai's recommendation that the Government create New Zealand Jobs and Skills Councils to align with Australia's approach, and existing WDC industry groupings.

**Proposal 2: Establishing an industry-led system for standards-setting and industry training**

**16. Which option do you prefer overall?**

Spada supports 'Option B: replace WDCs with industry specific standards-setting bodies' - slightly prefer.

*Why?*

- Because it is essential to have input from the industry – to have the industry voice included in the design and delivery of training for the screen sector is essential.
- Because the screen sector comprises mainly contractors rather than bricks and mortar businesses and is therefore a diverse workforce that benefits more from an industry voice to reflect the diverse training needs across the sector.

Spada supports Option 2B with the establishment of Jobs and Skills Councils with expanded functions.

**17. What are the main features and functions that Industry Training Boards (Option A) need to be successful?**

Spada does not support a return to Industry Training Boards in Option A, particularly given the screen sector - a \$3.2B per annum industry - was never reflected or represented under that structure and as a result lacked a voice in the design and development of education and career path for the screen.

**18. Under Option A, how important is it that Industry Training Boards and non-Industry Training Boards be able to arrange industry training?**

Spada does not support a return to Industry Training Boards as outlined in Option A. However, Spada supports Option 2B with the establishment of Jobs and Skills Councils with expanded functions, which may include the arranging of training with direct industry input.

- Industry voice in the design and delivery of training for the screen sector is essential.
- We support Option 2B because the screen sector is comprised of mainly contractors rather than bricks and mortar businesses and is therefore a diverse workforce that benefits more from an industry voice to reflect the diverse training needs across the sector.
- It's essential that any non-industry training boards work closely with industry representatives to ensure the relevant training e.g. latest technological advances and resources to current industry standard, which creates positive outcomes for learners entering the industry.

**19. What are the main features and functions that industry standards-setters (Option B) need to be successful?**

Spada supports the establishment of Jobs and Skills Council with expanded functions to ensure:

- It allows for standalone industry bodies with knowledge and insight of the screen sector to engage directly on the design, development and delivery of training.
- Addresses any concerns regarding conflict of interest between the design and delivery of training.
- It addresses the needs of diverse learners and regional demands, thus providing a more flexible and workable model for the screen sector.
- The World Economic Forum 2023 'Future of Jobs' Report states that 65% percent of young learners will do a job that is yet to be invented and now more than ever it is essential to invest in the delivery of training and education that supports creative thinking, entrepreneurial approaches and a multi-skilled approach to work and job creation.

- The VET system needs to be agile and responsive to a world that moves much much faster than it ever has before.
- There is currently nothing in Option B to indicate that all industries will have their own voice and representation, therefore industries like the screen sector who have not had an industry body creating a direct seat at the table previously.

**20. Are there any key features of the Workforce Development Councils that need to be retained in the new system?**

- Spada has worked closely with Toi Mai since its establishment and feels we have a strong relationship that is now based on a clear understanding on the unique workings of the screen industry, and the needs of the screen industry. This understanding and relationship underpin the successful delivery of training for the sector, and Spada wants this institutional knowledge, and the reciprocal trust built throughout, to be retained in whatever new system is implemented.
- Data collection and sharing has been hugely valuable to our sector from more than just a training perspective and needs to be retained.
- The need for screen sector voice in tertiary education to ensure relevance and positive outcomes for learners and the industry.
- The ability to consult widely with and remain connected to a largely sole-trader and contractor-based workforce across a very diverse sector.

**21. Are there any key features of how the previous Industry Training Organisations worked that should be reintroduced in the new system?**

The screen sector was not at all represented in the ITO model and does not support a return to an 'old industry' way of thinking, however, a well-functioning ITO could offer a holistic approach to the learner and their journey, acting as a conduit between learner, employer, and ITP to support strong outcomes for all.

**22. What are the possible benefits and risks of having a short moratorium on new industry training providers while the new system is set up?**

No comment.

**23. To what extent do you support the proposed funding shifts for 2026?**

The screen sector has never been a recipient of dedicated government funding through an ITO, so for our industry a proposed shift in funding would be to receive funding. Rather than have our screen funding agencies underwrite training. Therefore, Spada supports any structure that would bring new dedicated funding for training into our sector.

**24. What benefits and risks need to be taken into account for these changes?**

Spada supports a radical change to the way training and education is funded at Tertiary level, including Recommendation 2 in Toi Mai's 'Te Wao Nui o Toi – Te Waha o Tāne' Report: 'Toi Mai to explore the funding flows of tertiary screen programmes and advise the Tertiary Education Commission on alternative funding models for more industry-delivered training'.

***25. How should standards-setting be funded to ensure a viable and high-quality system?***

Standards setting should be funded through a formula that balances current industry GDP contribution and forecast GDP growth. Additional resource needs to be allocated to those industries that are growing the skilled workers of the future, such as arts and the screen sector. Funding also needs to enable standard setters to deliver options that increase the proportion of Māori and Pacific workers to population parity.

***26. How should the funding system recognise and incentivise the role that ITPs play in engaging with industry, supporting regional development, and/or attracting more international students to regions?***

All ITPs should be required to have an industry advisory group in their region for every industry their programmes are training for. Funding of programmes in vocational training should allow for industry workers and employers to connect with learners directly, regardless of whether on campus or on-job, to increase the likelihood of graduates securing direct employment. This is especially vital in the screen sector where word of mouth is how people are hired and jobs are not advertised across traditional work search channels.

***27. What role should non-volume-based funding play, and how should this be allocated?***

Non-volume based funding should be able to be flexible and applied quickly in specific regions or areas of need - e.g. when Aotearoa New Zealand had Amazon's 'Rings of Power' series filming it created unprecedented demand on roles which could have been met with targeted training to upskill existing crew and/or train new entrants to the screen sector as the pipeline of international productions increased.

**Concluding Questions**

***28. Could there be benefits or drawbacks for different types of students (e.g. Māori, Pacific, rural, disabled, and students with additional learning support needs) under these proposals?***

Due to the hands-on and intense nature of screen sector training additional funding support may need targeting to underrepresented communities.

**29. Could there be benefits or drawbacks from these proposals for particular industries or types of businesses?**

YES.

- The screen sector has finally found a voice in tertiary education through Toi Mai WDC and this must be retained to ensure relevance and positive outcomes for learners and the industry.
- Spada values the work undertaken by Toi Mai on behalf of the screen sector, and the data along with recommendations that have been widely consulted on.
- It is unclear whether the recommendations will be enacted under any of the three proposals, and whether this work will have been in vain with the screen sector once again left out of the equation when it comes to the design and delivery of tertiary education for our industry.
- The screen sector is a \$3.2B per annum industry: it is export, creates domestic IP creation, comprised of a highly skilled and internationally valued workforce, and contributes to the economic and cultural value of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- The screen sector should be recognised and valued in the tertiary training structure and mechanisms.

**30. Are there any other ideas, models, or decisions for redesigning the vocational education system that the Government should consider?**

YES.

- If the Government is going to disband WDCs, which would mean for our sector Toi Mai, we strongly recommend the Government create New Zealand Jobs and Skills Councils to align with Australia's approach and retain the existing WDC industry groupings.
- Through its strong sector relationships Toi Mai has delivered two reports for the screen sector that provides accurate insight into our industry and delivers better outcomes for learners and the sector alike. The recommendations in these two reports reflect a way forward that has been widely embraced by the screen sector, who have traditionally mistrusted tertiary education and the suitability of graduates from ITP programmes.

Whatever the next steps, Spada would like to see both the retention of these valuable relationships and the implementation of the screen sector report recommendations.

**Contact Details**

Should you wish to discuss this submission or Spada's position on any aspect of Vocational Education Reforms please contact Ness Simons, [comms@spada.co.nz](mailto:comms@spada.co.nz).

Ngā mihi,

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