

July 2024
White paper



AI Forum
New Zealand
Te Kāhui Atamai Iahiko o Aotearoa



AI IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

HOW IS AI IMPACTING AND SHAPING THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

Earlier this year, we hosted a global conversation for AI in Creative Industries. Our two day conference in Wellington explored how to navigate a creative future with AI.

The potential benefits of enhanced creativity and productivity gains were considered against the challenges, engaging the audience through a combination of storytelling, expert interviews, learning opportunities and roundtable discussions.

We live-streamed the second day of the event to design schools across Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, engaging students in discussions that tackled challenging topics and shifted the focus towards achieving positive future outcomes.

TECHNOLOGY'S CUTTING EDGE IN PRODUCTION AND POST-PRODUCTION

What is the role of AI in creative industries? Our first keynote presentation by Kimball Thurston, CTO of Wētā FX, showed us a world of possibilities in VFX. Kimball demonstrated how machine learning technology is being embedded into Wētā FX's tools to help empower their artists' creativity.

Our second keynote was from Danijela Horak, Head of AI Research at the BBC (UK), discussing the use of AI to accelerate the repair of BBC's archive and add colourisation – including some of the unintended results! She also explored the use of deepfakes to anonymise people for news reports and conversely working with the BBC's fact checkers to address the challenges of detecting deepfakes.

The roundtable discussions then began by questioning the creative industry's responsibility to adopt a broader perspective in its endeavours. Participants discussed the inherent tension in balancing innovation with economic viability in high-budget projects.

That conversation raised the necessity of collective creativity, suggesting AI could serve as a catalyst for new ideas, while affirming the irreplaceable value of human creativity and judgement. Participants further explored themes of economic accessibility, transparency, and the balancing act between technology and misinformation. This highlighted the critical role of artists in navigating an evolving landscape of identity and ethics in the digital age.

TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST - NAVIGATING OUR CORE VALUES

Day two spotlighted the importance of transparency and trust in AI's integration into creative processes. Our candid discussions embraced AI's role in augmenting creativity, particularly through its application in generating concept art, without replacing the human touch.

Key strategic priorities emerged, focusing on fortifying trust in information, enhancing source verification, and the imperative for AI to operate with transparency. A call was made for increased educational initiatives to raise inclusiveness and the steps needed to improve the development of talent. There was further discussion regarding AI's potential pitfalls and promises, and calls for a cohesive ethical and regulatory stance on its use.

THE GENERATIVE AI REVOLUTION

The BBC's Laura Ellis, Head of Future Technologies was joined by Cristobal Valenzuela, CEO and Co-Founder of Runway AI (NYC), in a discussion on the use of AI as a creative tool. They explored how it can assist creatives in unlocking their potential and accelerate their ability to produce.

Our roundtable discussions examined the advent of generative AI, stirring debates on its classification as merely a tool, given its unprecedented speed and sophistication. Transparency in data sources, the possibility of co-regulation, and the nuances of copyright and creator rights also dominated the discussion.

The dialogue also delved into the evolving music industry, creator consent, and the balance between individual creators and commercial entities. The need for a global conversation, inclusion of diverse perspectives and education on AI, was emphasised, along with New Zealand's potential leadership role in the creative sector.

BUILDING A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Our next discussion explored the importance of creative ownership rights and new education pathways required to help harness these tools effectively. WeCreate's Chair, Paula Browning moderated a panel with Sam Irvine, CEO of Copyright NZ, Dr Claire Robinson, CEO of Toi Mai Workforce Development Council and Suzanne Miller, Director of Growth Practices at Datacom.

The following roundtable discussions explored the dichotomy between open and closed AI systems, with a consensus on the growing public concern over data privacy and the authenticity of AI-generated content.

New Zealand's approach, favouring skill development and infrastructure over immediate regulatory action was debated. Proposals included an AI awareness curriculum and adopting Te Ao Māori frameworks to nurture responsible AI usage within communities. This was coupled with an enthusiasm for adopting international regulatory best practices tailored to New Zealand's context.

DATA AND THE WISDOM OF CROWDS

Laura Ellis returned to chat with Yves Bergquist, Director on AI and Neuroscience in Media, Entertainment Technology Center (ETC), University of Southern California on the challenges associated with gaining worthwhile insights from audience data.

Laura was then joined by David Shanks, Director of RDC and former NZ Chief Censor, Megan Tapsell, Chair of the AI Forum and member of the Māori Technology Group, and Michael Witbrock, Professor of AI at the University of Auckland, who contextualised the conversation about information and audiences within Aotearoa New Zealand.

WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS AND SOCIETAL IMPACTS?

Participants were apprehensive about information polarisation and the loss of diplomatic mediation facilitated by AI. The discussion broadened to include ethical considerations of AI's dominance and the need for policies that consider future generations.

The conversation underscored the rapid pace of AI evolution and the potential societal shift away from AI, highlighting the importance of ethical foundations in technology development.

HUMANS IN THE LOOP

The final theme explored the ongoing role of humans in the creative world as AI continues to encroach in unexpected ways.

Laura was joined by Joe Raeburn, CEO of 2UpGames and Midu Chandra, Head of Datacom Foundry, in a discussion that revisited our initial topic: how creatives are leveraging the latest Gen AI tools to produce better products faster. The key discussion points emphasised not fearing the technology, but harnessing it to our advantage.

Laura's final chat was with Soul Machine's Greg Cross, CEO and Co-Founder. They discussed Gen AI's impact on democratising access to digital humans and its potential impact. For example, Soul Machines saw the opportunity Gen AI presented to pivot their business from a handful of very large sales to more than 70,000 digital humans per month. This in turn is expanding the type of roles and interactions we have with digital humans, improving accessibility and engagement. It also recognises that, especially in resource-poor areas, digital solutions are often the preferred choice.

HOW CAN WE MANAGE HUMAN-AI INTERACTIONS?

This discussion centred on AI's ethical dimensions, particularly its management of harm and its impact on social skills. Contributors emphasised the importance of diversity in governance, the lessons from social media's integration into society, and the critical role of education in guiding AI's societal integration.

Our dialogue also reflected the intimate nature of AI interactions and the broader implications for social and ethical norms, urging us to consider our ability to have inbuilt regulations in terms of shifting behaviours.

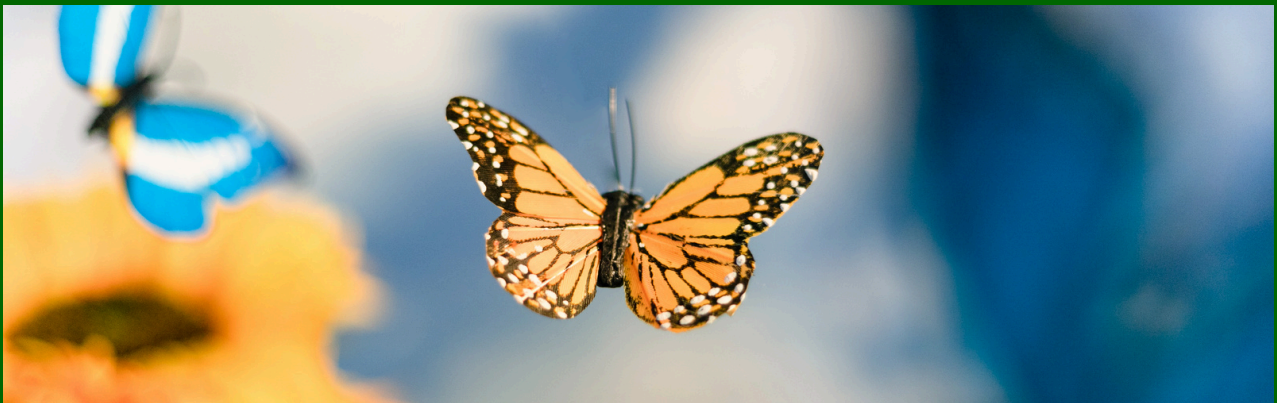
ACKNOWLEDGING OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT

Our conference illuminated the multifaceted relationship between AI and creativity, weaving together discussions on technology, ethics, and the future of creative work. Collectively, we emphasised a shared commitment to responsibly harnessing AI, ensuring that human creativity and ethical considerations guide the path towards a future enhanced by AI in the creative industries. Meanwhile, BBC News has launched a new content credentials feature, [BBC Verify](#). This transparency tool confirms where an image or video has originated and its authenticity.



We delved into the role of AI in transforming creative industries, exploring both its potential benefits and ethical considerations.

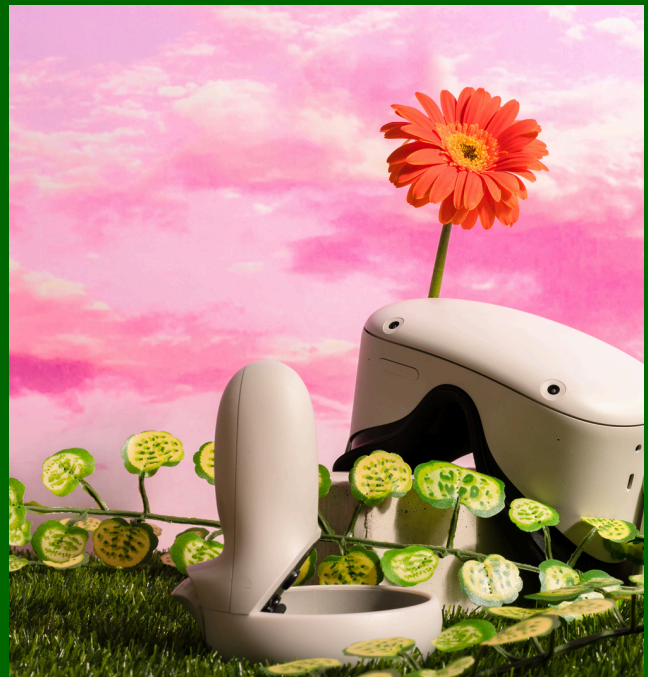
Thanks to contributions by Meta, Education New Zealand and Future Works, we were able to live stream this event to design schools across Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.



ABOUT US

In March 2024, the AI Forum of New Zealand (AI Forum), in partnership with WeCreate, Creative HQ, Datacom and Weta FX, convened an artificial intelligence (AI) in Creative Industries Conference in Wellington Te Whanganui-a-Tara, New Zealand.

Our two day event hosted global experts across the realms of creativity, technology, academia, and governance.



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