

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2026

19 September 2026

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangatanga maha, nei rā te reo mihi e whakamanawa nei i tēnei kaupapa o ngā kaiwherawhera kiriata.

Ngā mihi ki ngā mema poari e hoki mai ki DEGANZ ki 2027. Ngā mihi ki ō tātau mahi, ō whakaaro, ō pūngao. Tēnā tātou katoa.

Ngā mihi ki ngā mate, e haere ki te pō, haere haere haere.

Kia ngā kaiarahi, ngā kaihangā auaha, a Dame Jools Topp - he ata, he kaiwhakangahau o Aotearoa, he ata o āku takatāpui whānau. Haere atu rā. A ko Leo Koziol, he kaitiaki o te Wairoa Māori kiriata hui ahurei. Ngā mihi ki Sam Neil, he kiriwhakaari matua ki Aotearoa me te Ao. Haere haere haere atu rā.

No reira tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, kia ora mai koutou katoa.

E huri au inaiane ki te reo Pakeha.

Thank to all the board members sincerely for your work, your thoughts and your energy over the last year. We are fortunate that all the present board members are running again for this coming year. I am in the enviable position that I actually really enjoy my time spent discussing DEGANZ matters with you and appreciate all you do for your fellow members.

I take this opportunity to give thanks and respect to the leaders and innovators who are sadly no longer with us, but whose legacy lives on in our memories. We remember Dame Jools Topp, a legendary, groundbreaking NZ entertainer, an iconic New Zealander and takatāpui whānau. We remember Leo Koziol - founder of the Wairoa Māori Film Festival in 2005, creating what became New Zealand's longest-running Indigenous film festival, "Godfather of Indigenous Cinema", spent decades promoting Indigenous stories on both national and international stages. Longtime co-curator of the Ngā Whanaunga Māori Pasifika short film programme at the New Zealand International Film Festival and also curated Indigenous film programmes for festivals in North America, Australia and Europe.

Sam Neil - Legend of local and international television and film. These extraordinary New Zealanders hold a light for us in the dark times of what can be achieved and what we should strive for.

He whakatauki:

Mā mua ka kite a muri, mā muri ka ora a mua

Those who lead give sight to those who follow, those who follow give life to those who lead

As always for our members, times are tough and budgets and staff are being cut left and right. It has never been more precarious to be in the film and television industry. My heart goes out to our whānau who are struggling to find work at this time. As a practitioner still working and doing what I love in Wellington, long after most of the television and film work has left, I consider my contemporaries and I survivors. Huge respect to my fellow survivors across the motu. It continues to be a privilege to count myself alongside other storytellers, and it is our aim on this board to advocate and fight for your rights, so that you might continue to do your best work in a long and fruitful career. Ake ake ake

Following below is an outline of just some of the major activities undertaken by DEGANZ since the last AGM.

ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

SIWA

Even after considerable pressure and back-and-forth discussions between the worker organisations and SPADA since the end of 2022, when the Screen Industry Workers Act came into being, SPADA has still not registered for collective bargaining, which is voluntary on their part under the act. They have been brought as close as they have ever been to registering for collective bargaining under SIWA. But they still have not registered.

However, the pressure worker organisations have exerted is finally seeing some response from them, with more activity on their part to get producers to understand the Act, and feed back into SPADA with thoughts and concerns.

That said, from the worker organisations' perspectives, their lack of any effort in the last three years and limited efforts now are intended to prolong the process until after the elections in November, with the hope that a re-elected National-led government will repeal SIWA. There is no indication at this point that the act will be repealed by National.

DEGANZ and the other worker organisations are currently strategising about how to move SPADA more quickly to registration.

New Zealand Film Commission

Industry Investment and Cohesion Review

NZFC is conducting a review based on how effective their spending is in regard to supporting the industry, which includes a review of their core funding to guilds and associations. We are proactively responding to this together with other guilds and associations, seeking opportunities to work more closely together for efficiency and effectiveness. The review also encompasses looking at how cohesive the sector is or isn't in its representations to government and if it could be improved.

Government is keen for one voice to represent the sector. Resurfacing is the discussion around a pan-sector screen body and whether or not it could be a solution here. The review, led by former NZFC board member and employee Lisa Chatfield, will go to the NZFC board in November.

Domestic Rebate Criteria

Following on from the decline of The Canyon Letter of Non-objection, DEGANZ gained Equity NZ, NZWG and SMSG support for a letter to Minister of Arts Culture and Heritage Paul Goldsmith requesting that only New Zealanders should be employed on any project that accesses the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate Domestic, unless a specific dispensation is granted from the relevant guild or it's an official coproduction. In DEGANZ case, that would be for the director or editor, In Equity's case for actors, NZWG's for writers, and so on.

This position is to safeguard New Zealanders' right to be employed on NZ productions that get the 40% domestic rebate. The international rebate of 20 - 25% can be and is accessed for productions that wish to use non-New Zealanders in key roles. Unfortunately, in the recent changes to the New Zealand Screen Rebate Domestic Criteria, this request was not met. We will continue to lobby for this.

Editor Replacement Guide

DEGANZ has been concerned for quite some time now about the increased frequency of editors being replaced on feature films. When this happens, it has often been poorly handled, resulting in, in some cases, significant mental and emotional stress for the editor being replaced. DEGANZ accepts that in some cases, editors do need to be replaced, but that a procedure is required to determine whether it should occur, and if so how.

DEGANZ established a sub-committee to look at the issue and develop recommendations. Subcommittee members Annie Collins ANZSE, Peter Roberts ANZSE and Martin Brinkler ACE have created an Editor Replacement best practice guide, which the board has reviewed and forwarded on to the New Zealand Film Producers Alliance for comment and feedback.

DEGANZ AI Guide progress

President Ben Powdrell has been consulting with various post-production houses on effective and ethical use of AI in post-production. Feeding into this is former board member and scripted director Caroline Bell Booth, who is currently engaged in research around AI use in the screen industry for her Master's. Caroline's focus is the intersection of AI and screen funding body funding.

AI use is a fast-moving space, and there are multiple guides already in circulation (NZFC, NZWG), but the DEGANZ board feels there is a need for a dedicated guide for directors and editors. We will look to publish our own guide (this year) and update it as required, based on the work Caroline is doing as well as our own research.

ASDACS

A significant restructure at the board level of the Australian Screen Directors Authorship Collection Society has had a positive outcome for both DEGANZ and the Australian Directors Guild. ASDACS is now keenly focused on providing support to both organisations. It is currently reviewing its constitution to see what financial support it can offer both guilds in regard to their operations. This is a timely reminder

to encourage all New Zealand directors to join ASDACS. Membership is free, there is the possibility of secondary revenue income for you if your works have screened outside NZ, and if you are a DEGANZ member, it means that they will not deduct the administration fee for non-DEGANZ members.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There has been quite a significant shift in regard to NZFC funding for professional development. They have opened up to applications from a much wider base of organisations and individuals with their efforts to devolve professional development out of the organisation. This has resulted in a drop in funding for professional development programmes through DEGANZ, particularly for one-day workshops. We have, however, managed to retain some key workshops and programmes over the last year, being:

- The NZ participation in the Melbourne International Film Festival 5-day Accelerator Lab.
- A 3-day Directing Actors Workshop with Miranda Harcourt
- Director attachments on drama series, with our most recent being Isla McLeod to David Stubbs on *Red Rocks* and Pon Tothienchai to Peter Salmon on *Good Bones*.
- Editor attachments, with our most recent being Nadia Darby to Martin Brinkler on *Invertigo*

We have just applied to NZFC for funding for a further series of workshops for the end of this year and the first half of next.

Thanks to financial support from ASDACS, we have a Masterclass and project consultations planned next month with Australian director Natalie Bailey.

We continue to run a significant number of events using our operational funding. These include:

DEGANZ Selects, of which we held two: one with US director Lesli Linka Glatter, who was also the Directors Guild of America President, and one with expat Editor Chris Plummer.

Check-In Tuesdays, our bimonthly online get-together for DEGANZ members. These have included:

- A focus on Comedy with Jesse Griffin and Ben Powdrell.
- Directing Country Calendar with Celia Jaspers, Howard Taylor, Roz Mason, facilitated by Zoe Macintosh
- The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly of AI Animation with directors Kim Webby, Nicholas Riini & Rob Morgenstern

While we only held one Screenlink event in the last year:

- More Than Just a Soundtrack: How Music Can Elevate Your Film at Any Budget with 'The Weed Eaters'

We continued with our new Factual Series of events, with the last being:

- Ethics in Factual Filmmaking, with Leanne Pooley, Cushla Dillon, Kim Webby and Rāhera Herewini Mulligan, facilitated by Robyn Paterson.

We continue our partnership with NZWG and Equity NZ on Table Reads, which sees our director members' scripts get a table read with actors.

Our long-term relationship with Rialto Cinemas continues with Film Talks Q & A's with Kiwi directors whose films go into release.

Prior to COVID, DEGANZ had a strong relationship with the NZ International Film Festival, administering a visiting international director's masterclass, and the visiting director hosting programme where members were paired with visiting international directors. This year we ran the masterclass with Kiwi director Pietra Brett-Kelly, and revived the hosting programme, with Australian director Sophie Hyde, Japanese director Yukiko Sode, Nepalese director Abinash Bikram Shah, Australian director James J Robinson, and German director Kai Stänicke.

We also joined together with WIFTNZ on two events:

- A special screening of *TENOR: My Name is Pati*, by DEGANZ board member Rebecca Tansley and
- *Finding Your Voice* and *Tribe: A conversation with Jarusha Hess*

Shadowing

The Guild introduced a new professional development initiative this year as part of its core activities in Director/Editor Shadowing for early-stage directors and editors. This opportunity puts shadows together with experienced directors and editors for one-day on set or in the edit suite. It is designed to offer the placement:

- real insight into the processes, challenges and successes of a working director or editor on a production
- Interaction with an experienced "hand" who can provide useful information and advice
- opportunity to expand their industry network

There were more than 30 applicants for this, with three already placed:

1. Mirene Castelfort with director Jackie van Beek on a TV commercial
2. Guillaume Arnoulet with editor Martin Brinkler on feature film *Invertigo*

We will continue to place shadows on projects as and when opportunities arise.

Sponsorships

DEGANZ continues its long support of Show Me Shorts, with sponsorship of the Best Director and Best Editor awards.

Last year at the Inaugural New Zealand Screen Awards, DEGANZ sponsored Best Director Narrative and Best Editor Narrative. For this year, we will maintain the Best Director Narrative Award sponsorship, with a plan to sponsor Best Editor Narrative Award next year.

2026 was the first time DEGANZ has formerly supported the 48hr film competition, widely recognized and promoted as the largest filmmaking competition and challenge in the Southern Hemisphere. Board

members are encouraged to attend the finals in the major centres and regional final online. The 48hrs teams have offered free sponsor tickets to take advantage of.

Career and Contractual Advice

DEGANZ continues to provide career and contractual advice (but not legal advice) for members through Executive Director Tui Ruwhiu. This is available to members whenever they wish to access it and we encourage you to do so.

Website

After many years of faithful service, the guild website is getting a refresh. This will happen over the next few months as we seek to update and refresh the content, while slimming it down to make it more user-friendly and efficient.

ACE

In an effort to expand our international networks, editors on the DEGANZ board met with the international committee of American Cinema Editors, thanks to board member Martin Brinkler, who is an ACE member. While nothing specifically concrete in regard to outputs came from the meeting, it was warm, cordial, and the beginning of what we hope will be an ongoing relationship with ACE.

ANZSE

Finally, Last year the guild introduced the Aotearoa New Zealand Screen Editors accreditation. The inaugural recipients of ANZSE accreditation were Annie Collins, Peter Roberts and Jonno Woodford Robinson. At the time, we did not have their accreditation certificates, which are now available. Unfortunately, both Annie and Jonno can't be here today in person as they are in Wellington, while Peter Roberts is in the UK visiting family. We do though, have their certificates to pass on to them. We are excited to announce the awarding of ANZSE accreditation to editor Francis Glenday, who unfortunately is also overseas and can't be here.

The ANZSE panel of Annie, Peter and Jonno had this to say:

*The ANZSE committee have examined the materials put forward by FRANCIS GLENDAY in support of his application for editor accreditation and after detailed discussion we are confident in accepting his application and **recommend that he be accredited.***

Francis has a very broad range and depth of editorial skills gained over 25 years, encompassing aptitude with cross-cultural work, DEGANZ Board and committee service, training and mentoring as well as designing post systems at an international level.

We are of the opinion that Francis has been steadily increasing his capabilities while contributing to our industry and will continue to do so.

Congratulations, Francis!

Thanks for your patience and attention in listening to this report.

Go well, kia kaha, and illegitimi non carborundum = don't let the bastards grind you down.