

# Voids Activation Pop-up Project

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Pop-up Occupiers Guide

WESTMINSTER  
**BUSINESS**UNIT



City of Westminster

## Background

Westminster City Council is developing a pop-up project to rapidly address the impact that vacant units have on visitors' perception of a place.

The project seeks to provide differentiated approaches to raise the profile of each area through a targeted network of activations.

The pop-up project aims to test innovative concepts through a programme of events, services and activities that will occupy empty premises with the aim of encouraging people to use spaces in different ways.

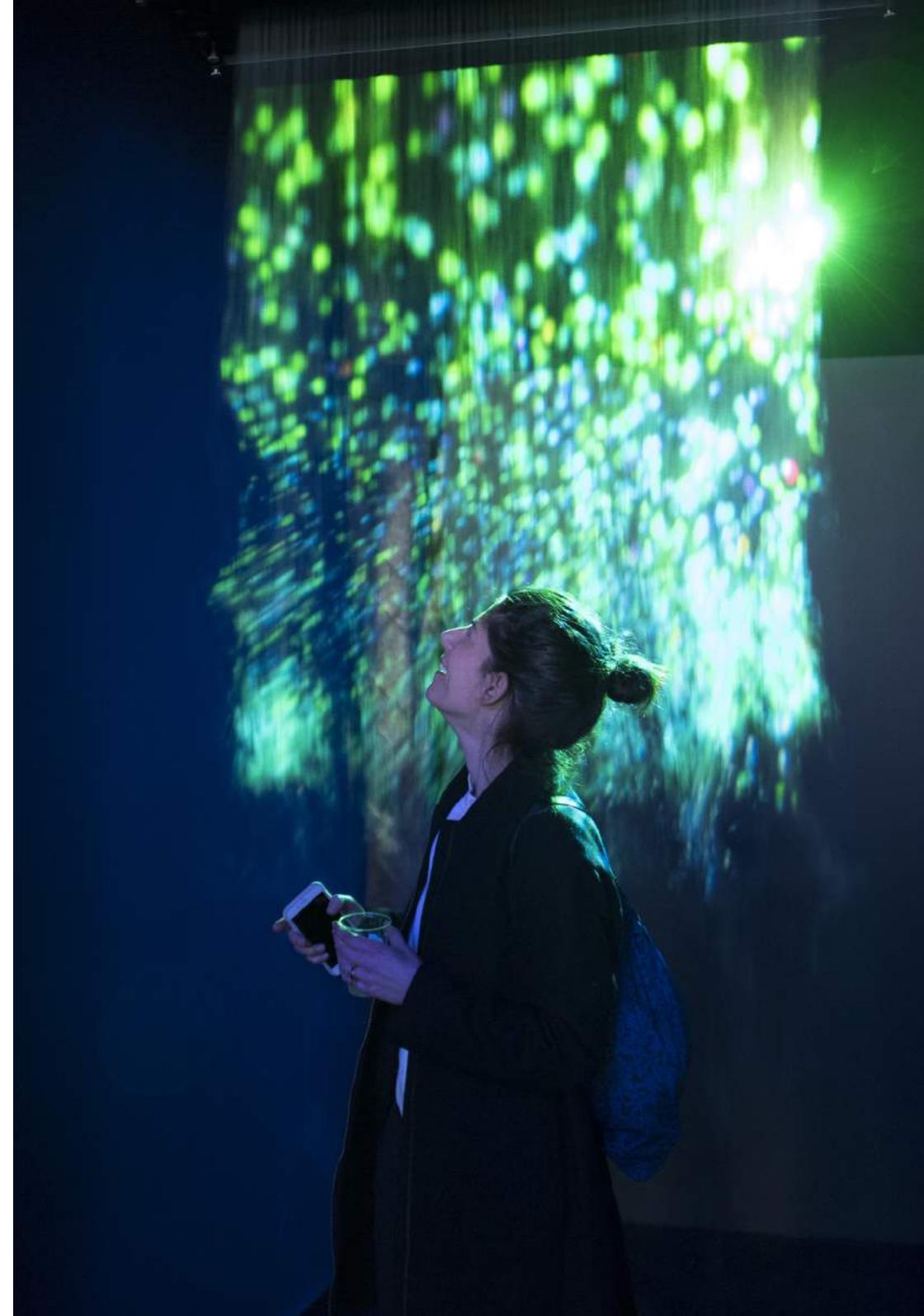
In the current climate, a near term approach to trial and experiment with new ideas and business models is key to support the visitor economy and the area's resilience to ensure it remains relevant to future visitors. The temporary new landscape created by the diverse pop-up ventures will help to feed the evolution of the area's post-Covid features.

The project seeks to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports small scale businesses, homegrown start-ups, and emerging creative talent. We aim for the project to act as a space for the next generation of local talent and as an experimental platform where innovative modes of production, business models and ideas for a better future are tested.

## Pop-up project for New West End Company

The aim is to promote the area as a first seen district and the best place to scale-up businesses, through an innovative programmatic mix formed by a new generation of local talent and start-ups. A destination that performs as a living laboratory that enables open-ended interactions and new ways of making and doing to activate spaces in ways that haven't been seen before. The project aims to create a temporary place that can be experienced through a network of practised spaces that create unique social locations.

WCC in partnership with NWECC are calling for digital and mixed media artists, upcoming fashion brands as well as product and experience designers to activate prime retail spaces on Oxford Street, Regent Street and in Mayfair, and to take part in NWECC's Sustainable Fashion Month and Summer in the City initiatives.



## Pop-up concept brief

### Retail Laboratories

#### Aims

Support NWECC's Sustainable Fashion Month and give a new generation of designers the opportunity to reimagine retail and challenge the way we consume fashion by exploring new ways of making and doing under business models that support the circular economy whilst connecting local distinctiveness and global trends.

#### The concept

Turn vacant units into cotemporary fashion ateliers where the process of production provides a highly personalised experience, turning the area into a destination where unique and limited-edition goods are produced and consumed on site. The concept challenges current practices by promoting more sustainable production and consumption models such as:

- **Made to order:** A production mode that seeks to avoid producing surplus quantities of stock. The aim is to create customised pieces that are the product of an exchange of ideas between the designer and the client.
- **Upcycling:** A concept that aims to turn deadstock and old clothes into new pieces, allowing customers to bring their pre-loved items to be reassembled into a unique piece.
- **Designer rental:** The concept promotes the rental of statement pieces. The aim is to work with stylists and designers to create outfits composed of unique pieces which will be showcased in exhibitions and runway shows.

#### Relevance

The ways in which visitors consume fashion has changed its focus from the product (what we sell) to experiences (how we sell it), which has highlighted the importance of rethinking retail as a more complex activity. In addition, the imminent changes in working practices, urges us to think beyond transactional retail and business models that rely on convenience, and focus on incorporating activities and services that add value to the shopping experience, giving visitors a reason to come to the district.



# Dreamscapes

## Aims

Improve customers' journey and experience of the area via the creation of seasonal immersive spaces that intersect visitors' everyday activities, re-providing services and spaces that the city lacks.

## The concept

These hybrid spaces, that are 50 percent a gallery and 50 percent a shop, mix art and commerce by performing as installation/boutiques that showcase the work of different brands, artists and designers under the same roof, allowing visitors to buy any piece of this ever-changing installation.

The unit becomes a hub that supports everyday activities through the creation of themed installations that invite visitors to work, take a break, relax, shop and immerse in a surreal space in which merchandise, activities, services and events are highly curated to provide visitor's with a meaningful experience whilst acting as the perfect background for user generated content.

## Relevance

Prioritising engagement over sales via the creation of temporary environments that enhance visitors' experience by supporting their journey with services and activities has never been more relevant.



## Mixed reality spaces

### Aims

Diversify the existing offer by incorporating mixed reality spaces that use mixed media and digital art to create immersive installations

### The concept

Turn empty units into alternative realms that perform as responsive environments in which technology enables us to construct experiences that generate emotional responses.

### Relevance

The multiple ways in which visitors engage with places has highlighted the importance of creating responsive spaces where the physical and virtual realms perform as interdependent elements, enabling spaces to be consumed as transformative experiences.



# Experiential wellness spaces

## Aims

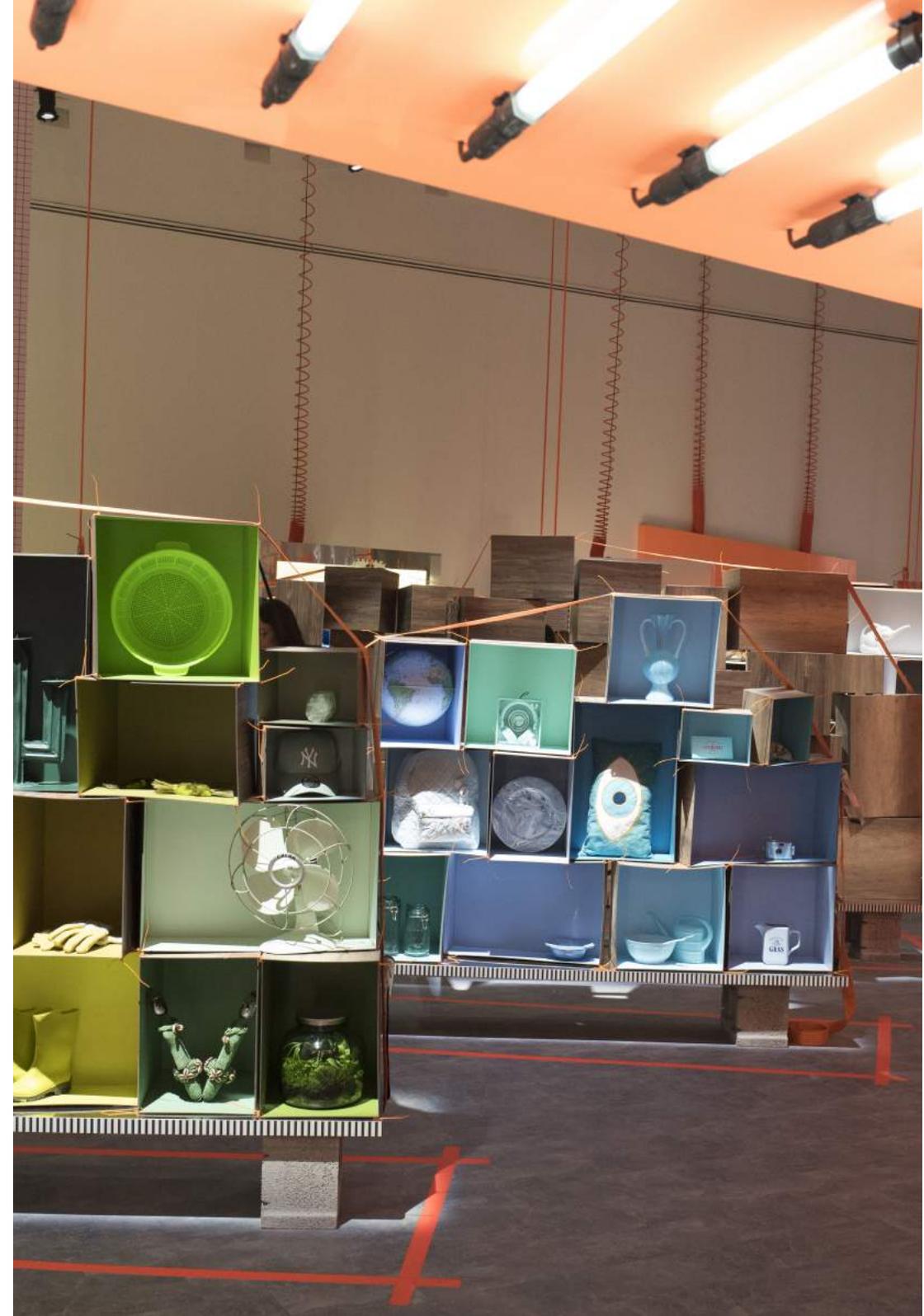
The project seeks to create spaces that will be consumed as transformative experiences which will have a positive impact in visitors' lives by enabling them to explore ways to improve physical and mental health. The aim is to create an immersive space that intersects visitors' everyday routines, providing services and experiences that will transform their journey by offering ways to feel better physically and mentally.

## The concept

Turn vacant units into immersive environments that enable visitors to experience brands with all their senses. The space will perform as a wellness hub that invites guests to improve their health, fitness levels and mindfulness by holding daily events, activities and workshops around wellness including fitness classes, yoga and guided meditation sessions.

## Relevance

The unit becomes a hybrid space that supports everyday activities via the creation of engaging product displays that invite visitors to take a break, rest, relax, learn, transform, shop and immerse in a surreal space in which merchandise, activities, services and events are highly curated to provide visitor's with a meaningful experience around wellness.



## Delivery framework

### Unit requirements

- Short term standardised lease
- Rent free period
- Flexibility to make non-structural changes. Upon termination of the tenancy the premise will be reinstated back to the original condition

### Amenities:

- Lighting
- Heating
- Toilets

### Planning permission and advertisement consent

Any uses which do not fall within class E will require planning permission.

- Class E (commercial, businesses and services) includes shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, businesses, light industrial activities, indoor sport, recreation or fitness, medical or health services and day centres.
- Learning and non-residential institutions such as museums fall within class F1 and will therefore require planning permission.
- Local community uses fall within class F2 and will therefore require planning permission.
- Any uses which do not fall within the categories provided are referred to as 'Sui Generis' and will require planning permission. Examples of a sui generis use include theatres, drinking establishments and venues for live music performance.

Advertisement consent will be required for all pop-ups

WCC will submit the planning permission and advertisement consent applications on behalf of end occupiers.

## Business rates

Central Government's retail hospitality and leisure 100% rates holiday scheme has been extended to 30 June. The scheme will come to a tapered end with 66% business rates relief for the period from 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022.

We are exploring a model which will enable further reduced rates for property owners and free rates for end occupiers of pop-ups planned through the later summer months and through to October 2021.

## Showcasing Enterprise, Arts & Culture Fund

Grants for up to £5,000 will be awarded to eligible applicants.

Applicants can apply for one of the two following grants:

- Up to £2,500 for short-term activation proposals (1 month or less), which benefit is career development (the opportunity to increase recognition, showcase talent and raise brand profile).
- - Up to £7,500 for more ambitious proposals offering higher impact and community engagement outcomes; that are looking to occupy the space for a period between two and up to three months.

These grants will fund actual costs for fitout and the commission of artists and designers to produce live art, limited edition items and personalised merchandise from these spaces.

The budget allocated for the commission of artists and designers should cover the following costs:

- All professional fees, expenses, design development, and workshop costs, insurances and permissions to deliver the project.
- Costs of materials, fabrication, production and installation (and de-installation).
- Service charges and utilities.
- Each pop-up occupier will be required to ensure they have appropriate insurance in place. The insurance policy will need to be accepted by the space operator. The nature and level of coverage required will vary depending on the activities to be delivered. All applicants will be required to have public liability insurance, as well as contents insurance.

## Security deposit fee

Pop-up occupiers will be required to pay a nominal security deposit fee which is likely to be £1,000.00. This amount is subject to approval of property owners and could vary depending on the property that will be occupied. The security deposit fee will need to be paid to the space operator who will pay the sum back to the pop-up occupiers, once the premise has been vacated.

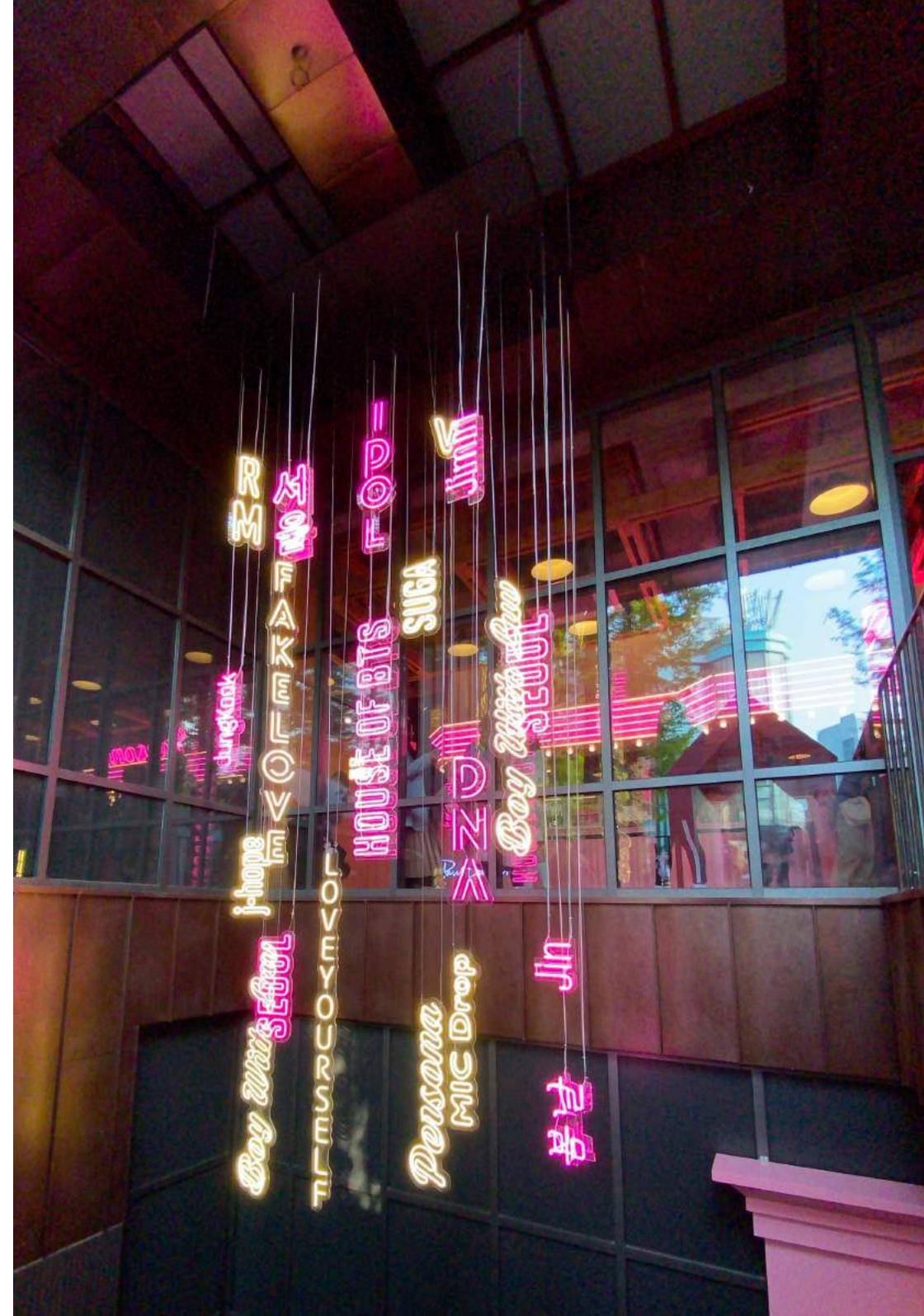
The space operator will pay back the total amount of the security deposit fee if no damages have been caused to the premise.

## White box fit out service

The basic 'white box' fit out service will ensure the premise is ready so the temporary occupier can undertake decorative works. WCC will cover the costs of this service with funds from the Stimulating the Economy Capital Fund.

The scope of works will vary depending on the condition of each premise, yet the works that will be expected pre-occupancy are: ensure walls are clean, ensure electrical switches work, ensure restrooms work, ensure lights work, remove old features that could put new tenant and visitors at risk (large-scale elements will not be removed unless they present an imminent danger to people).

Once the temporary lease ends, the contractor will reinstate the premise so it is ready for a new tenant's remodelling works. The works that will be expected post occupancy are: ensure floors and walls are clean, remove tenant's improvements including signage and decorative elements (artworks as well as any large scale furniture will be removed by the tenant once the license period is over).



# Pop-up opportunities during Summer in the City's season and Sustainable Fashion Month

## Application Process

All applications for a pop-up space must be submitted through our online platform which will be operating from late April:

### [Application Form](#)

A commission brief for the activation concepts detailed in this document will be published and circulated among WCC's network.

The commission brief will provide details about the online application form, selection process, requirements, grants' eligibility criteria, scoring criteria and proposal requirements.

Proposals may be submitted dependant on suitability of chosen medium for their selected area under any of the following themes:

- Sustainability
- Fashion
- Culture
- Entertainment
- Inclusivity
- Innovation & technology
- Wellness
- Beauty

## Pop-up selection criteria

The process has been designed to be transparent, clear, timebound and to maximise the opportunity to support UK businesses and creatives.

All applications will be assessed against the following scoring criteria:

- Concept's Originality and Inventiveness
- Context and Connection to Site
- Feasibility and Delivery
- Applicant Information



## Marketing & promotion

Participants will benefit from free promotion across the following channels:

### Oxford Street

Instagram: @oxfordstreetw1

Facebook: facebook.com/Oxford Street/

### Regent Street

Instagram: @regentstreetw1

Website: www.regentstreetonline.com

### NWEC

Website: www.newwestend.com

Linkedin: linkedin.com/company/new-west-end-company/

### Westminster City Council

Website: westminster.gov.uk

Instagram: instagram.com/citywestminster/

Facebook: facebook.com/CityWestminster/

Twitter: twitter.com/citywestminster

Contact us to discuss to learn more about this exciting opportunity.

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