

Voids Activation Pop-up Project

Pop-up Occupiers Guide

WESTMINSTER
BUSINESSUNIT



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.

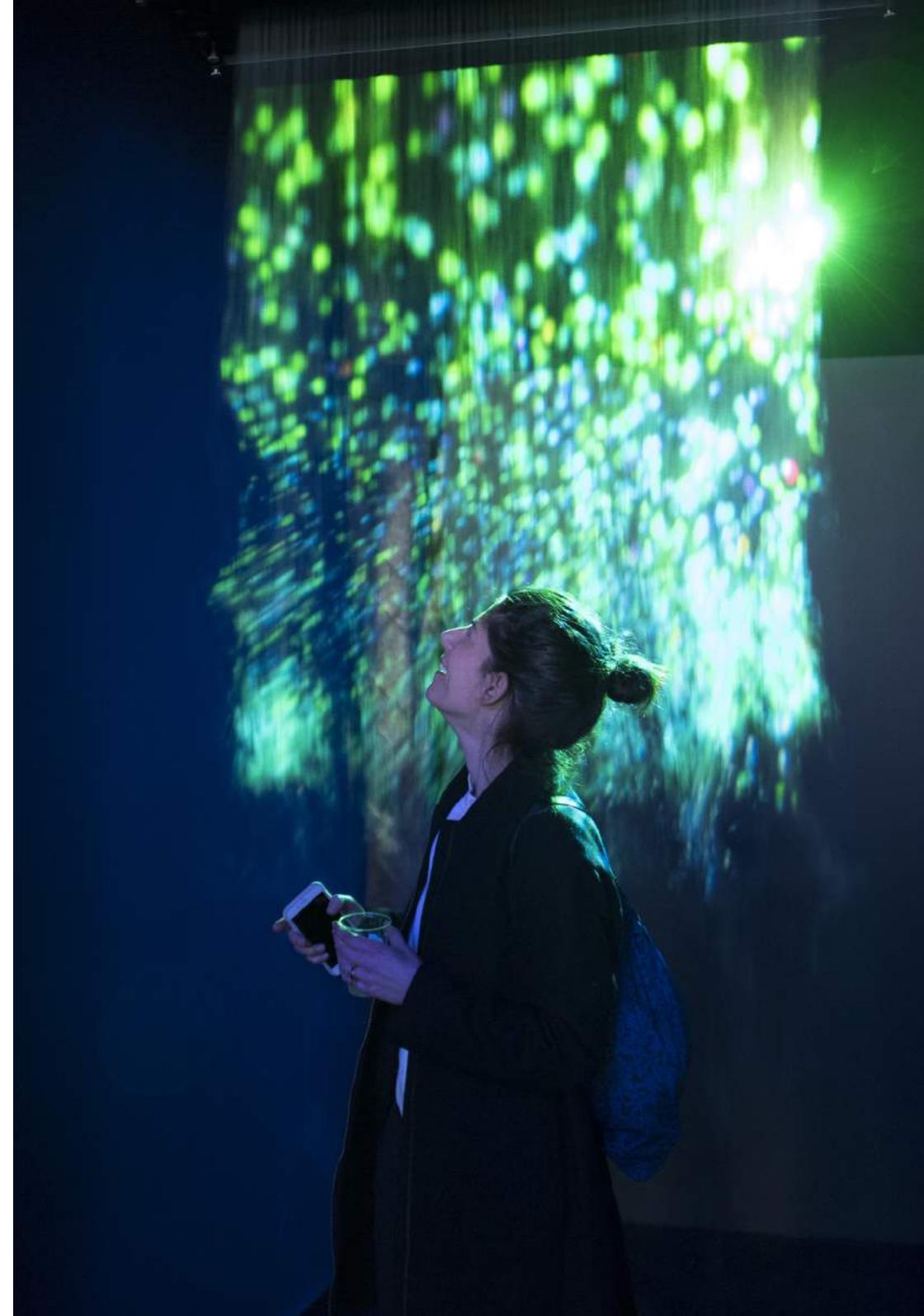
In the current climate, a near term approach to trial and experiment with new ideas and business models is key to support the visitor economy and the area's resilience to ensure it remains relevant to future visitors. The temporary new landscape created by the diverse pop-up ventures will help to feed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

The aim is to promote the area's assets by creating a temporary network of highly curated social locations and dynamic spaces that excite, engage and support a diverse community of people via the provision of unique experiences that enhance the pedestrian and streetscape experience.

WCC in partnership with Northbank and Victoria BIDs are calling for digital and mixed media artists, upcoming fashion brands as well as product and experience designers to activate void premises in the Strand Aldwych area.



Pop-up concept brief

Entrepreneurial Living Labs

Aims

Create an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurial innovation by giving a new generation of designers and creators the opportunity to capitalise on knowledge and start up a business based in research and fabrication.

The concept

Turn vacant units into living labs where visitors can experience the different stages of the creative process from the conception of an idea to the production phase, fabrication and materialisation into a concrete object.

This business model framework allows for retail, education and entertainment to coexist and develop within the same space enabling visitors to learn how great ideas are brought to life and how materials and tools are utilised in the fabrication of the objects that will be commercialised on site.



Multisensory Spaces

Aims

Champion cultural innovation via the creation of responsive spaces that use technology as a tool to construct experiences that generate emotional responses.

The concept

The project seeks to turn empty units into immersive environments where all the senses are activated by different elements. An exploratory space that places visitors at the centre of the journey, encouraging them to interact with their surroundings in a way that enables the space to be consumed as a transformative experience.



Open Studios

Aims

Foster social innovation via the creation of a network of local hubs of cultural exchange and research where memories and knowledge are produced, consumed and commercialised. This installation project becomes a space where participants are actively involved in the discussion and implementation of new solutions for a better future.

The concept

The project seeks to turn vacant units into spaces for social cohesion, where like-minded individuals and organisations work together to address real social concerns. A space that will foster new social relationships between individuals and groups by using research as a tool to transfer knowledge via the creation of communal experiences that combine workshops, installations, and participatory exhibitions to improve the way people from different backgrounds and groups communicate and interact.



Delivery framework

Unit requirements

- Short term standardised lease
- Rent free period
- Utilities costs / service charges included
- 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 proposals which benefit is career development (the opportunity to increase recognition, showcase talent and raise brand profile).
- Up to £5,000 for more ambitious proposals offering higher impact and public and audience engagement outcomes.

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).
- Insurance policy: 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.

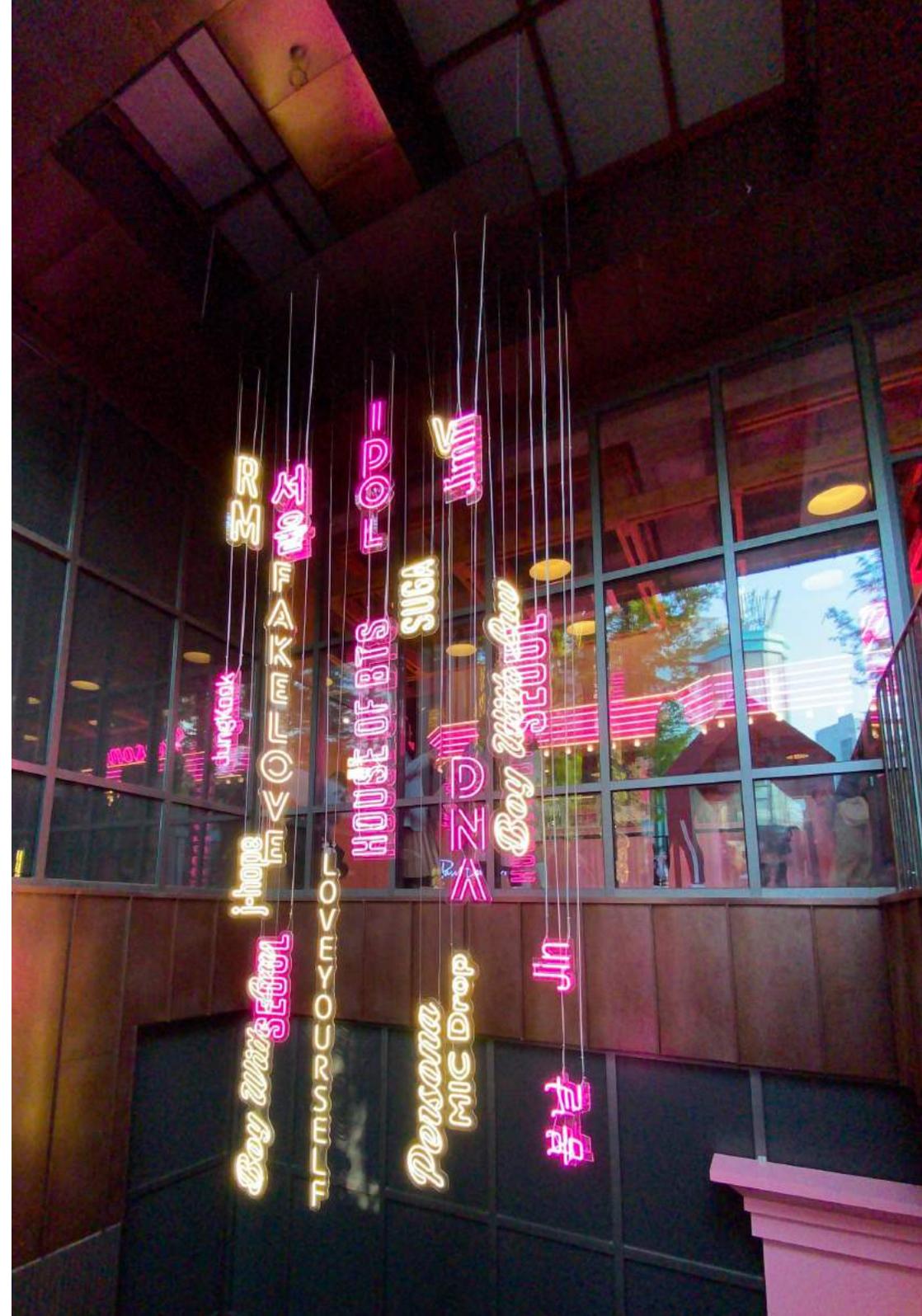
The space operator will pay back the total amount of the security deposit fee if no damages have been caused to the premise.

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).



Strand Aldwych: Pop-up Opportunities

Application Process

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

[Application Form](#)

A commission brief for the activation concepts detailed in this document will be published and circulated.

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

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

A panel of experts formed by Arts & Culture Institutions' representatives, WCC officers and BIDs' representatives will evaluate the proposals.

The maximum occupation period is three months.



Marketing & promotion

Participants will benefit from free promotion across the following channels:

Westminster City Council

Website: westminster.gov.uk

Instagram: [instagram.com/citywestminster/](https://www.instagram.com/citywestminster/)

Facebook: [facebook.com/CityWestminster/](https://www.facebook.com/CityWestminster/)

Twitter: twitter.com/citywestminster

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

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