

London's West End launches pop-up programme to entice exciting brands to the nation's high street

- **Competition launches to offer prime retail space to innovative brands on and around Oxford Street, Regent Street and in Mayfair**
 - **The project provides opportunities for small scale businesses, homegrown start-ups, and emerging creative talent to have presence in central London**

Westminster City Council, in partnership with New West End Company and The Crown Estate, is launching a Pop-Up Programme to give a new generation of local talent and start-ups the opportunity to open their doors in London's coveted West End.

The programme will help shape the future of our high streets. It will test innovative concepts through a programme of events, services, and activities in available spaces to encourage people to use spaces in different ways - focussing on engagement and interaction over sales.

On and around Oxford Street, Regent Street and in Mayfair, the 10 vacant units will aim to give forward thinking, sustainable and innovative companies the opportunity to showcase their work on London's world-famous streets over a period of three months.

The programme looks to attract pioneering businesses that fall into the following four categories:

- **Fashion Laboratories:** Giving a new generation of designers the opportunity to reimagine retail and challenge the way we consume fashion under business models that support sustainability whilst connecting local distinctiveness and global trends.
- **Dreamscapes:** Improve customers' journey and experience of the area via the creation of seasonal immersive spaces.
- **Mixed Reality Spaces:** Diversify the existing offer by incorporating mixed reality spaces that use mixed media and digital art to create immersive installations.
- **Wellness and wellbeing:** Bringing a offer to suit the evolving needs of consumers who are increasingly looking to fit wellness and wellbeing into their daily lives.

To further support the promotion of successful applicants, Westminster City Council is offering grants of up to £5,000 to further enhance brand profiles and help fund fitout and installations.

Cllr Matthew Green, Cabinet Member for Business, Licensing and Planning at Westminster City Council, said: “From Alexander McQueen to Hussein Chalayan, emerging British designers have long turned to the West End to start their businesses. Now, Westminster City Council’s pop-up programme will enable the next generation of creative design and innovation to flourish as we support new businesses and starts-ups to grow and thrive in the heart of the West End. These new and engaging offerings will attract residents and visitors alike back to the world’s leading centre of retail. The West End pop-up programme follows on from a series of art-led installations in empty units that the Council and partners is set to launch in the St. James’s area in June. Westminster City Council plans even more exciting pop-ups to help encourage people to visit our city while supporting budding artists, designers and businesses.”

This project is part of a wider programme led by the Council and delivered in collaboration with Business Improvement Districts and property owners across Westminster.

Luciana Magliocco, Associate Director at New West End Company commented: “We are thrilled to be giving inspiring new business leaders the opportunity to showcase their brands and offerings in London’s West End. The High Street is evolving and the past year has been a catalyst for more rapid change. We are ready to embrace and welcome new ideas and business models to ensure our district remains relevant to future visitors and responds to changing customer trends. The temporary new landscape created by the pop-up ventures will help to feed the evolution of the West End’s post-Covid environment and retail and leisure ecosystem.”

Katerina Mercury, Senior Asset Manager at The Crown Estate commented: “As we look ahead to the future of the West End, partnerships are vital in exploring new and innovative concepts. This Pop-Up programme is a great opportunity to build on our continued investment and evolution of the West End, and we look forward to working with Westminster City Council and NVEC as the programme develops.”

For more information and to apply visit: <https://businesswestminster.com/business-enterprise/popup/> The application process is now open until 7 June.

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Notes to Editors

About New West End Company

New West End Company is a partnership of 600 retail, restaurant, hotel and property owners across the world's top shopping and leisure destination anchored by Bond Street, Oxford Street and Regent Street.

It works in partnership delivering transformational projects, sustainable place management, destination marketing, advocacy, inward investment and commercial insights. It is an influential business voice, active in the wider community and a key partner in delivering a new West End.

Westminster City Council Pop up Programme

Westminster City Council is funding the Voids Activation & Pop-up project to support UK emerging creative talent, local start-ups and small scale businesses by giving them the opportunity to raise their profile and generate income under an operational framework that enables them to activate available spaces in key commercial centres across the borough free of any cost. This is part of a wider programme to support economic recovery in the Westminster.