

10 March 2025

File Ref: IRC-7922

7(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 7(2)(a)

Thank you for your email dated 10 February 2025 to Te Kaunihera o Pōneke | Wellington City Council (the Council) requesting the following information in relation to the [Pops of Positive](#) initiative:

1. *A breakdown of the total costs associated with the “Pops of Positive” initiative, including:*
  - *Expenditure on materials, design, installation, and maintenance.*
  - *The specific budget appropriation or funding source used.*
  - *Any contributions or sponsorships from third parties.*
2. *Documentation or correspondence outlining the decision-making process for this initiative, including:*
  - *Rationale for its implementation and expected outcomes.*
  - *Any public or community consultation conducted as part of the project*
  - *Minutes of meetings, reports, or memos discussing the initiative.*
3. *Information on contractors, designers, or artists involved in the initiative, including:*
  - *Terms of engagement and deliverables expected.*
  - *Selection criteria or processes used to appoint contractors or contributors.*
  - *Costs associated with their services.*
4. *Any assessments or reports evaluating the impact of the initiative, such as:*
  - *Public feedback or surveys regarding the project.*
  - *Metrics or KPIs used to measure its success.*
  - *Any plans for similar initiatives in the future.*
5. *Details on ongoing maintenance and funding, including:*
  - *The estimated annual maintenance costs.*
  - *The responsible department or entity managing the maintenance.*

Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). Please find my response below.

### **Pops of Positive**

Pops of Positive is a pilot project to activate empty shop fronts through showcasing local artist works. This initiative aims to bring vibrancy, enhance safety and promote retail tenancies in key central city streets. The pilot is currently running in three spaces on Manners Street.

**Question 1** - A breakdown of the total costs associated with the “Pops of Positive” initiative including:

- *Expenditure on materials, design, installation, and maintenance.*

Three artists were paid a grant of \$5,000 each to cover costs associated with creating, installing and maintaining artworks in the empty retail spaces including/materials, transport, installation, design and administration fees and any ongoing maintenance (e.g. repairing and cleaning) costs.

Council are guided by Creative New Zealand’s [Remuneration policy for artists](#), and are committed to paying artists at least a living wage for their work. The \$5,000 grant artists received for the Pops of Positive initiative is in line with funding for similar-type projects and ensures artists are remunerated appropriately for the design, installation, maintenance, and public display of their work.

The Council also consulted a specialist lighting designer to provide installation advice to artists at a one-off cost of \$700.

Circular labels were printed on vinyl and installed in the windows, one for each retail space (photographed in the Pops of Positive link above) at a total cost of \$400. The design of these labels was managed in-house within the Council.

- *The specific budget appropriation or funding source used.*

The budget for the Pops of Positive initiative was allocated through Council's economic funds

- *Any contributions or sponsorships from third parties.*

Property owners have contributed in-kind through waived rent for the duration of the installations to the approximate value of \$30,000 (based on a minimum 3-month activation period). There is no third-party sponsorship.

Please note, this estimated value above is derived from aggregated data and reflects indicative market rent trends within the area.

**Question 2** - Documentation or correspondence outlining the decision-making process for this initiative, including:

- *Rationale for its implementation and expected outcomes.*

This initiative falls under Outcome 6 of the [Economic Wellbeing Strategy](#) adopted in 2022:

*Action 6.2.5 Explore opportunities to activate empty buildings and shop fronts and consider the most critical locations for retail and hospitality activities.*

Since COVID, vacant spaces (i.e. untenanted buildings) have become more prevalent in many city centres across the world as working from home trends continue and as cities evolve from being dominated by places of work and shopping, to places of experience and lifestyle.

For Wellington, vacancy rates have steadily increased over the last few years, with some areas of concentration such as the Manners and Courtenay precincts, while Cuba, Willis and Lambton have higher turnover of leases and spaces more quickly filled.

Vacant retail spaces can become entrenched, attract antisocial behaviour and drive negative perceptions of safety in the broader street.

The changing nature of our central city streets provide opportunities for property owners to think innovatively about how they activate their shop fronts to help address issues of concern as well as attract new tenants.

One way is to activate shop fronts through temporary or pop-up activities using art, design and emerging businesses.

This project has been modelled on Auckland's successful, Vacant Stores Initiative, which resulted in seven (7) out of 13 vacant sites which had installations in during 2021 and 2022 being leased.

The primary objectives for this initiative are to:

- Create a sense of activity, and brighten up the street
  - Encourage leasing of vacant sites through making empty spaces more attractive and desirable for potential tenants
  - Attract people to the area and improve footfall
  - Mitigate antisocial behaviour enabled by vacant sites
  - Support economic development in this area
  - Increase the visibility of art and culture in the city.
- *Any public or community consultation conducted as part of the project.*

There is no public or community consultation for this project.

- *Minutes of meetings, reports, or memos discussing the initiative.*

There were a range of meetings between the Council, property agents and artists between June to December 2024 on this initiative, however there are no formal minutes therefore this part of your request has been refused under section 17(g) of the LGOIMA because the requested information is not held.

I can confirm the main outcomes of these meetings were:

- Identify project scope and brief
- Identify appropriate sites for activation
- Coordination and liaising with property agents and building owners for access to available sites
- Liaising with artists during production and installation.

Attached to this response is a document titled "Appendix 1" which contains the Creative Brief for more information.

**Question 3 - Information on contractors, designers, or artists involved in the initiative, including:**

- *Terms of engagement and deliverables expected.*

Please find attached to this response a document titled 'Appendix 2' which provides a copy of the letter of agreement sent to each of the selected artists.

- *Selection criteria or processes used to appoint contractors or contributors.*

The Council called for proposals from seven local artists whose work aligned with the objectives of the brief; then assessed the applications against the following weighted criteria:

- a. Impactful, positive, bold and colourful. Installations must be highly visible from the street and from buses. (40%)

- b. Installations will respond to the site and disrupt the space to attract attention / generate curiosity among passers-by / have an interactive element. (20%)
  - c. Designed to last for up to one year without requiring regular maintenance. Flexible and able to be moved around relatively easily. (20%)
  - d. Consideration and sensitivity must be given to the wider context – Manners Street and the inner city. (20%)
- o *Costs associated with their services.*

All associated costs were factored into the grant provided to each artist for their installation.

**Question 4** - *Any assessments or reports evaluating the impact of the initiative, such as:*

- o *Public feedback or surveys regarding the project.*
- o *Metrics or KPIs used to measure its success.*
- o *Any plans for similar initiatives in the future.*

Part of your request has been assessed and the decision to refuse it under section 17(g) of the LGOIMA because the requested information is not held. While this information is not currently available, assessments for evaluating the initiative's impact are in progress and will inform future planning.

**Question 5** - *Details on ongoing maintenance and funding, including:*

- o *The estimated annual maintenance costs.*
- o *The responsible department or entity managing the maintenance.*

Annual maintenance and any costs associated with maintenance are the responsibility of the artist as specified in the artist agreement within 'Appendix 2'.

You have the right, by way of complaint under section 28(1) of the LGOIMA, to request an investigation and review of the Council's decision to withhold information by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you require further information, please contact [official.information@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:official.information@wcc.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā



Ollie Marchant  
Senior Advisor  
Official Information & Privacy  
Wellington City Council

# *Pops of Positive* at Manners

Creative Brief  
August 2024

## PROJECT

*Pops of Positive* is an initiative to activate empty retail spaces across the city with temporary, site-specific creative installations. With thanks to local building owners and leasing agents, Pops of Positive will populate Manners Street this summer.

## INTRODUCTION

Council is calling for proposals from creatives – artists, designers, and lighting technicians – to activate a series of empty retail spaces along Manners Street from the former Dotti Store beside McDonalds to the spaces below the DOC offices and beside Arapaki Library. The aim for this project is to give Manners Street and the retail spaces a little love, and to showcase some of the city's creative talent outside of the usual gallery or studio where you might see art and to encourage potential leasers to think about this area differently.

## BACKGROUND

Increasing costs to run businesses coupled with cost-of-living pressures mean many businesses are struggling or needing to close their doors. Vacant shopfronts can attract anti-social behaviour, contributing to negative perceptions of safety and of pride in our city.

Empty retail spaces are noticeably common along the Golden Mile from Lambton Quay to Courtenay Place. This is our premier shopping, hospitality, and entertainment area. Manners Street, along the Golden Mile, has been identified as a priority location due to its high footfall, safety concerns, calls from businesses to see changes, and a busy bus route, which sees many commuters passing through.

Pops of positive has been initiated in response, to celebrate this area, inject love and positivity into the street, showcase creative solutions, and ultimately to make these sites more leasable. This project has been modelled on Auckland's successful, [Vacant Stores Initiative](#), which resulted in seven (7) out of 13 vacant sites which had installations in during 2021 and 2022 being leased.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES & CRITERIA

Four creative installations that respond to project objectives and criteria will be selected.

The theme for this series of work is creativity – colour – positivity; artworks must be impactful, bold, and positive! The aim of this project is to increase interest in the area, to uplift the street, slow people down and contribute to creating a feeling of positivity and safety.

Installations will respond to each site, however, should have potential to be moved to or replicated at another site. Installations will be temporary, that is lasting from three (3) months to one year. They could be interactive and move or they could be static, sculptural installations or window graphics. Lighting must be a strong component, whether as part of the work, backlit or spotlit. Projections within retail spaces are a possibility. There's potential for artists to repurpose existing artwork, designs, or lighting installations. Plans for each space are available on request.

The primary objectives for this initiative are to:

- contribute to a vibrant city centre
- encourage leasing of vacant sites
- attract people to the area and improve footfall
- mitigate antisocial behaviour enabled by vacant sites
- support economic development in this area
- increase the visibility of art and culture in the city.

Criteria for creative installations (to achieve project objectives above):

- Impactful – colourful and bold.
- Imbued with positivity and good vibes.
- Installations will respond to the site, for example the installation might:
  - disrupt this space to attract attention
  - generate curiosity among passers by
  - Have an interactive element.
- Installations must be highly visible from the street and from buses.
- Temporary – designed to last for up to one year without requiring regular maintenance.
- Consideration and sensitivity must be given to the wider context.
- Consideration should be given to allowing space (on windows) for leasing agent details and logos/brands. Note that any signage or logos/brands is the responsibility of the agent and/or council's design team not the artist.

## SITES

The selected sites are on Manners Street in Central Wellington. They are currently empty and are former retail stores from fashion to hair. They are all great spaces to showcase the depth and diversity of our city's creativity with large glass windows and access to power for lighting, projections and/or sculptural installations.



18 Manners Street (below Department of Conservation)



34 Manners



36 Manners Street



66 Manners Street (former Dotti fashion store)

## PROCESS & TIMEFRAME

TASK	DATE
Submission of proposals	End September
Confirm selection	Early October
Fabrication and installation underway	October/November
Blessing and launch event for installations	End Nov/early Dec
Marketing and promotion	Nov/Dec

## BUDGET

Wellington City Council will grant selected creative projects \$5000 each (per retail space) to fabricate and install work. For more information about the budget or if you have any questions, please contact one of the project leads (contact details below).

## SUBMISSION

If you are interested in this project, please submit:

- scale drawings, designs or images that clearly describe or show what the work will look like in situ.
- what it will be fabricated from (what materials) and how it will be installed.
- a written description about the work (no more than 500 words).

by **midday on Friday 27 September**, to project leads.

## CONTACT

Arts Lead:

Katie Taylor-Duke, Senior Arts Advisor – Projects, Creative Capital

Email: [Katie.Taylor-Duke@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:Katie.Taylor-Duke@wcc.govt.nz)

Project Manager:

Prak Sritharan, Central City Manager – Economic Wellbeing

Email: [Prak.Sritharan@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:Prak.Sritharan@wcc.govt.nz)



**NAME**  
**ADDRESS**  
**ADDRESS**

DATE

Tēnā koe

***Letter of Agreement – Pops of Positive at Manners Street***

This letter of agreement outlines the terms and conditions for the Pops of Positive project, a Wellington City Council Economic Wellbeing and Arts initiative.

Council have commissioned you, NAME to participate in this project and create a digital installation for an empty retail space at XX Manners Street.

***Introduction***

Pops of Positive is an initiative to activate a series of empty retail spaces along Manners Street. The aim of this project is to showcase some of the city's creative talent outside of the usual arts spaces, and to encourage potential lessees to think about this area differently.

Empty retail spaces are noticeably common along the Golden Mile from Lambton Quay to Courtenay Place. Manners Street has been identified as a priority location due to its high footfall, safety concerns, calls from businesses to see change, and a busy bus route, which sees many commuters passing through.

Pops of Positive was initiated in response, to celebrate this area, inject positivity into the street, showcase creative solutions, and ultimately to make these sites more leasable.

***Artist information***

NAME will install artwork as part of the Pops of Positive project at XX Manners Street in central Wellington, from DATE. Artwork will be installed for up to three months or when the space is leased, however for no less than six weeks.

**The artist will:**

- take responsibility for installing their work at XX Manners Street.
- advise Council when install is complete and if there are any lighting requirements for the artwork.
- advise Council about any digital, technical or practical maintenance and/or cleaning requirements for the work.
- approve marketing and promotional material about the project and be available for a quote for media release or an interview if required.
- on completion of the project, in approximately three months' time, leave the space as they find it.

**The Council will:**

- liaise with the property manager to inform them about all aspects of this project, and including collecting keys and ensuring the artist can safely access the space when required.

- cover any costs associated with damage to or theft of the artwork or parts of the artwork while on display at XX Manners Street; however, Council will not cover costs associated with this if they have occurred as a result of being in transit or being packed in or out by the artist or artist assistants.
- promote the artist and artworks as part of our project communications.

### **Outcomes**

The aim of this project is to increase interest in the area, to uplift the street, slow people down and contribute to creating a feeling of positivity and safety.

#### The objectives for Pops of Positive are to:

- contribute to a vibrant city centre
- encourage leasing of vacant sites
- attract people to the area and improve footfall
- mitigate antisocial behaviour enabled by vacant sites
- support economic development in this area
- increase the visibility of art and culture in the city.

### **Grant terms, conditions, and payment**

An artist fee of \$5000 (plus GST if applies) will be paid to the artist as a grant, subject to these conditions:

1. Grant payment will be made upon signing of this letter of agreement and receipt of a valid tax invoice.
2. Should the project not proceed, for any reason whatsoever, then this funding will be returned to Council.
3. It is expected that this grant will cover the following costs:
  - relevant technical, digital and/or production cost of artworks
  - transportation of work to and from XX Manners Street
  - installation and de-installation of artworks
  - maintenance/cleaning of the artworks and the space if required
  - Artist design fee and project administration.

It is our pleasure to commission you, NAME for this project.

If you have any questions in relation to this letter or to the Pops of Positive project, do not hesitate to contact me.

Nāku noa, nā

### **Prak Sritharan**

Central City Manager, Wellington City Council

*Please sign this letter to record your agreement of these terms:*

ARTIST NAME  
[SIGNATURE]