



About Space FAQs

About Space is a short term programme to fill empty storefronts in the Hutt CBD. The licence agreement is based on accessing property on a rolling 30 day term, with the ability to extend for a second 30 day term per project, unless the property owner has the opportunity to lease the space to a commercial entity, which the applicant will be given a 10 day notice to vacate.

WHAT QUALIFIES AS AN ABOUT SPACE PROJECT?

Each project applicant will be held to a set of criteria based on the list below, but realise there are always exception to the rules, so a project may qualify providing there is an available space.

Project adds life to the CBD

About Space, like other programmes around the world is designed to bring life back to Hutt City. The projects placed in shop fronts will need to be interesting enough to bring people to the CBD and hopefully will continue to bring them back. The projects need to turn vacant spaces into vibrant spaces and be an asset to the street.

It is unique and local

All project must be created locally and have a level of uniqueness which would not be found in a suburban shopping centre. There will also be a limit to gallery type spaces. About Space is all about showcasing people making and presenting original items.

High degree of professionalism

There will always be a limited number of available spaces, so the most successful projects will be those of a high level of creativity and professionalism. This professionalism includes the appearance of the space activated, such as fit out, washing the windows, inside and out, sweeping, vacuuming. Causing no permanent damage to walls, floors or any part of neither the space, nor making any permanent changes to the floor plan of the space/building is expected of the participant(s).

Project has the potential to be an on-going activity

About Space is only interested in projects which can sustain on-going use (at least thirty days). An installation or project which is only a few days or hours will not qualify for this programme

Project is ready to go

Once the application is approved the project needs to be ready and available to go, applicant has the time and commitment to run the project for the stated amount of time in the licence

agreement. Project timing will be based on the availability of vacant spaces; most approvals from the property owner will be within less than a month prior to the requested installation date.

Has the support of a property owner

Every project will be accepted based on available properties and approval from the property owner.

SELECTING PROJECTS

First and foremost, having a suitable property for a project is the main factor to approving any applicant. There will be nothing About Space programme can do if there is not a suitable property.

Received applications will be reviewed based on the criteria as stated above, then discussed with the property owners to confirm what they would make their properties available for.

Once approved a meeting will be arranged to tour the property, meet the owner if necessary, sign licence agreements and plan installation. About Space's key focus is to promote original creativity from local art/creative groups and community groups. Projects that are similar, or copy existing businesses in the CBD will be refused.

COSTS TO PARTICIPATE

About Space will work with the property owners to offer spaces at no to low costs to the applicant. Participation fees will be based on the level of access of the space and intention to sell from that space. About Space will cover the costs of power paid directly to the property owner. The goal is to nurture projects to becoming a full on business and local on a permanent basis in the Hutt CBD.

MARKETING YOUR PROJECT

About Space Programme will create a package of collateral for marketing your project. This includes a business sign that will be displayed in one of the street facing windows of the location the project will be placed. Printed collateral can include where appropriate an A3 poster and/or a DL flyer. Templates have been created to brand the programme and feature your project. Every project will be uploaded to the About Space page on the Hutt City Council. Projects may also be added to Facebook and Our Hutt City monthly insert, providing the timing of the project works with the timing on the publication. Posters and flyers are distributed to the eight libraries, Community Halls, and Pools around the Hutt City; the quantity of printed collateral available is up to you depending on your distribution system. You should contact the media local and otherwise, a media release template is available on the About Space info page, or Google 'media release template' of which many can be accessed online. One way to help boost the marketing of your project is by having an event that relates to your project, whether an opening night, special presentations or other types of activities can help boost the awareness of your project.

Introduce yourself to the area businesses owner and staff, they can be great advocates for promoting the project, and in reverse you promoting their businesses. Another opportunity to think about is if there are any complimentary businesses already in the CBD that may be interested in partnering with to help promote both the project and the business.

PARTICIPANTS RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the location has been approved, the participant will be required to the best of their ability to draw up a plan of how the space will be fitted out for their project. It is best to find alternative ways to hang on the walls of any space, to reduce all potential damage as it will be your responsibility to fix, replace or repair all damage to the space prior to vacating and returning the key. The space must be returned to the owner in the same or better condition when you vacate the premises.

NON-ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Existing business which already rent a property, a business project hoping to relocate from a commercial space to an About Space property are not eligible. The priority of About Space is to fill current vacant space, not undermine existing businesses and existing commercial tenancies. This programme is designed to encourage new ideas, new initiatives which are not directly in competition with existing businesses. Properties are not to be lived in at all.

ABOUT SPACE AND BUSINESS START-UPS

About Space is happy to assist an applicant in their goal to becoming a business owner providing this is their first business venture and it is not indirect competition with an existing CBD business. Pop-up spaces will be treated as and expect to operate as a permanent business. Requirements include a professional looking fit-out for the space, set trading hours which need to be adhered to. Paying a peppercorn rent which will be pre-determined and agreed upon prior to access of the space. Having available a written plan for growth of the business for the project duration and beyond.

About Space is a Hutt City Council-sponsored initiative that aims to turn the city's empty shops into creative places the public can enjoy.

Art installations, pop-up shops, community creative projects
- it's all About Space.

