

Ngā wāhi auaha Creative spaces

igniting possibilities

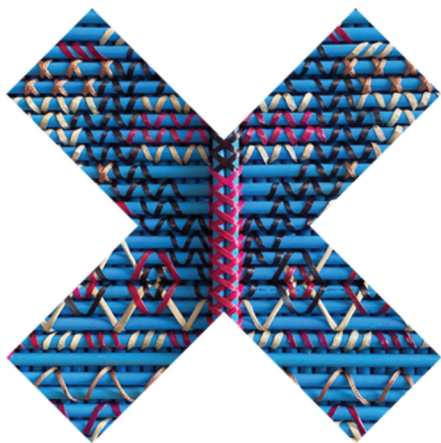
ACTION 2

It is important that local government in your area are made aware of who you are and what you do for your communities, and we need to be proactive at keeping them in the loop and inviting them to our spaces and events.

We have prepared a templated letter, and we are asking you to use it to invite your local MPs and/or councillors to one of your events that demonstrate the positive impact of the work that is happening in your creative space. You may like to invite them to visit and chat with some of your artists. The key message with this advocacy action is to connect and build relationships with the people that are at the heart of community-based decision and to make sure that they know about your creative space.

We have also created a template follow-up letter to politicians and councillors after their visit. This is a great way to not only thank them for their visit, as well as ask them for a letter of recommendation, a positive comment or endorsement; ask them to come back and visit; and ask them to champion your space and the work you're doing.

Find tools, examples, and resources for your advocacy campaigns:
creativespacesnetwork.org.nz/advocacy



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Please consider the following guidelines:

- You can use Parliament's [list of MPs](#) to find out your local MP. Your local councillors can be found on your local Council website.
- Share our key messages in your dialogue, wherever possible.
- Take a lot of photos for social media and tag the Creative Spaces Network when you post about the visit. Tag the people you host too and thank them for attending.
- Electorate MPs host constituent clinics on Fridays, and this is when they work in and for their community. Arrange a meeting a couple of months after you've hosted an MP or councillor and give them an update on what's been happening in your creative space.
- When you follow up, ask them for a letter of recommendation, a positive comment or endorsement; ask them to come back and visit; and ask them to champion your space and the work you're doing.
- Keep Arts Access Aotearoa and the Creative Spaces Network team in the loop so we can support you to get the most out of the opportunity.

Key messaging

- Creative spaces facilitate connectedness and partnership.
- Creative spaces empower people to achieve their full potential.
- Creative spaces harness the power of creativity to change lives.
- Creative spaces transform lives.
- Creative spaces provide pathways for people to connect and contribute to their communities.

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Template letter to invite politicians and councillors

[insert logo]

Tēnā koe [insert name]

[insert name of space] would like to invite you to visit our studio and [insert event/opportunity] learn more about our partnership with the [insert name of partner], using art to support [insert objective].

Would you be available to visit us at [insert address] on [insert date if relevant]? Please let me know if there are other dates that would be more suitable for you to visit.

[insert a paragraph about your creative space]

Eg; We are a creative space in Auckland. Our trained and passionate arts educators work with older people and people living with dementia through our visual arts programme, delivering facilitated art tours and art-making workshops at various venues across the city. In 2023, close to 3000 people participated in our programmes.

The discussions and supported art-making offer intellectual stimulation, cultural engagement and social interaction for our participants. We see huge, positive changes in their mental health and attitudes to life.

There are around 90 creative spaces throughout New Zealand, from Southland through to Northland. These community arts organisations and groups provide space, resources, opportunities and learning for people who face barriers to making art, including performing arts, toi Māori, circus, visual arts, sculpture, film and creative writing.

Participants come from diverse backgrounds and age groups, ranging from children and youth through to senior citizens. In the process of artmaking, they find validation, acceptance and a sense of identity, forging deep connections with themselves and others in the community. This sense of belonging nurtures individual wellbeing and also fosters a strong sense of community cohesion and resilience.

I welcome the opportunity to talk to you about the work we do at [insert name of space] and the positive impact we make every day. Like the other creative spaces in [insert region] and around the country, [insert name of space] supports the network of public organisations seeking to enable better lives for all New Zealanders.

I look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you to our creative space.

Ngā mihi nui

Template follow-up letter to politicians and councillors after their visit

[insert logo]

Tēnā koe [insert name]

[insert name of space] would like to thank you for visiting our youth graduation event [insert event or activity and more details if needed] on [insert day and date].

[insert a paragraph about the event or activity and importance of their visit]

[insert name of space] is a member of the Creative Spaces Network, facilitated by Arts Access Aotearoa. This Network supports around 70 creative spaces throughout New Zealand, from Southland through to Northland.

These community arts organisations and groups provide space, resources, opportunities and learning for people who face barriers to making art, including performing arts, toi Māori, circus, visual arts, sculpture, film and creative writing. They support many other public organisations seeking to enable better lives for all New Zealanders. Participants come from diverse backgrounds and age groups, ranging from children and youth through to senior citizens. In the process of art-making, they find validation, acceptance, and a sense of belonging and connection. This nurtures individual wellbeing, and fosters community cohesion and resilience.

[Call to action]

Ask them to champion your space and the work you're doing. This could include a letter of recommendation, a positive comment that you could use in your promotions, or an endorsement. You could also ask them to come back and visit.

I look forward to hearing from you and welcoming you back to our creative space so we can [introduce you to our artists / open our upcoming exhibition / etc] and you can experience firsthand the positive impact that we make.

Conclude with one of these key messages:

At [insert name], we believe that ...

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- Creative spaces transform lives.
- Creative spaces provide pathways for people to connect and contribute to their communities.

Ngā mihi nui