



## CALL TO Creative Entrepreneurs

### ***Project Storefronts: Stimulating New Haven's Creative Economy***

Posted: January 1, 2011  
Location: City of New Haven, Connecticut  
Call type: Artists, Artists teams, Non Profit Organizations, Small Start-Up Creative Industry entrepreneurs and businesses  
Deadline: Ongoing  
Proposals accepted in person or through mail (no email, faxes or online submissions):  
New Haven Festivals, Inc. c/o  
The Department of Cultural Affairs  
City of New Haven  
165 Church Street, 6<sup>th</sup> floor  
New Haven, CT 06510

#### **PROJECT SUMMARY & SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

- I. Opportunity Summary
- II. Background Information  
City of New Haven: Connecticut's Creative + Cultural Capital  
Trends Utilizing Empty Commercial Spaces for the Arts
- III. Goals of the Project
- IV. Eligibility
- V. Parameters
- VI. Information Sessions
- VII. Application Review Process
- VIII. Timeline
- IX. Submission Process
- X. Submission Documents

#### **I. OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY**

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), City of New Haven, Connecticut seeks proposals from individual artists/artist teams, not-for-profit arts organizations and for-profit creative entrepreneurs/start-up enterprises with missions and interests related to the arts and the creative industries, to occupy and utilize empty retail space in imaginative and innovative ways with the ultimate goal of creating new For-Profit Businesses.

The program is a collaboration between prospective entrepreneurs, property owners, the New Haven Economic Development Corporation and The City of New Haven.

## **II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### ***New Haven: Connecticut's Creative + Cultural Capital***

New Haven is the second-largest city in Connecticut, with more than 125,000 residents, 11,000 university students, and several major commercial districts both downtown and across the city. The greater New Haven region is home to more than 850,000 residents within only 600 square miles. New Haven's downtown has a diverse and dense residential population for a city its size, with more than 7,500 residents in the immediate downtown area.

New Haven is known as the ***Creative Capital of Connecticut*** and is proud of its artistic heritage. It has an impressive collection of arts and cultural institutions that rival cities many times its size. But in addition to the city's well established professional theaters, museums, arts educational entities, orchestras and chorales, New Haven is blessed with an abundance of small performing organizations, writers, musicians, poets, dancers, sculptors, painters, and designers of all types.

The creative spirit long known as "Yankee Ingenuity" is alive and well in New Haven and bursting out in the usual and not-so-usual places. There is a bohemian underside to this small city that is attracting large numbers of new residents in the form of students, young professionals, families and empty nesters who seek an active lifestyle in a lively urban environment.

Cafes, bookstores and neighborhood establishments are an important part of this city which boasts some the Northeast's best architecture, including much affordable housing located in a broad cross section of interesting neighborhoods. New Haven is a "smart city" in many ways -- and not just because five colleges and universities make this their home. It is also an increasingly "green" city with one of New England's largest cycling communities, fabulous parks, a waterfront wind mill, Zip Cars, new technology and other business incubators.

New Haven's public art numbers more than 400 installations including murals, sculpture, stained glass, and more by local as well as world-renowned artists. From the trendy Artspace Center for Contemporary Art, which produces the largest Open Studios on the East coast, to the two week-long International Festival of Arts & Ideas, the city is rich with cultural opportunities.

### ***National Trends & the Benefits of Using Empty Commercial Spaces for Art***

The current economic recession has resulted in more empty storefronts in every city. Innovative communities are turning the recession into creative opportunities and New Haven has taken note. Across the nation, empty storefronts are being transformed for new uses. From Los Angeles' Phantom Gallery to New York's well-established Swing Space Program, artists, arts organizations and entrepreneurs are temporarily transforming empty spaces into experimental laboratories and incubators for innovative retail, performance, exhibition,

education and countless entrepreneurial outlets . Many of these projects are spurring economic growth through new start-up businesses while fostering new creative communities.

### ***New Haven's Success to Date***

New Haven's own Project Storefronts program has already proven its value of providing creative entrepreneurs an opportunity to test market products and their business acumen before making permanent investments and commitments. In existence since only summer 2010, our Ninth Square site on lower Orange Street in downtown has offered a low-budget way for prospective entrepreneurs to demonstrate viability and tweak their business plan. The Program has also exposed this rental property to potential long term tenants and increased foot traffic in the area tremendously. The well-lit storefronts also enliven the street even when the project is closed. For more information and press coverage, visit

[www.projectstorefrontsnewhaven.com](http://www.projectstorefrontsnewhaven.com)

Some examples of temporary experiments that are already taking place in retail spaces, including New Haven's Project Storefronts, include

- Art installations/galleries
- Special interest bookstores
- Arts classes/educational uses
- Retail for creatively re-cycled, up-cycled wares
- Retail for handmade creations
- Live performances
- New technology/green goods
- Seasonal and holiday sales
- Filmmaking and screenings
- Urban gardening
- Food and other culinary-related uses
- Vintage clothing, housewares and
- Numerous types of consignments

### **III. PROJECT GOALS:**

New Haven's goals for the project are:

1. To create visitor destinations in formerly empty spaces which drive new consumers into underutilized areas, increasing foot traffic and business to not only these spaces but neighboring ones as well.
2. To raise awareness of New Haven's different commercial districts and help promote underutilized spaces to potential long-term tenants which can eventually create jobs and help expand the tax base.
3. To grow interest in and awareness of the New Haven's various design businesses and expand people's understanding and appreciation of the variety of creative endeavors existent in our city.
4. To encourage creativity to blossom and grow in New Haven.

5. To enliven New Haven neighborhoods by expanding commercial activity, making the City more attractive to potential residents, businesses, students and other artists
6. To facilitate and inspire new artistic, creative and/or entrepreneurial start-up businesses.
7. To enhance New Haven's reputation as Connecticut's Creative Capital.

#### **IV. ELIGIBILITY**

Priority will be given to existing New Haven-based artists and organizations, however, proposals from CT, NY, MA and RI are also encouraged. Applicants do not need to be CT based, but during the project duration they should reside in or within commuting distance of New Haven.

#### **V. CONSIDERATIONS & REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS**

The Project Storefronts Pilot Program undertaken in 2010 has been seen as an important new initiative for New Haven. With only some minor revisions to the Program, we are now accepting applications for 2011. Due to the nature of securing temporary storefronts, our current location at 71 Orange Street may be subject to change depending on long-term rental interest. Consequently, applications are being accepted for both the current location and other potential sites for which discussions are on-going with potential landlords.

Project Storefronts presents a unique opportunity for participants to realize projects, refine marketing and business plans with support from the city's Office of Economic Development's small business professionals. This program enables start up creative businesses to test their product and potential neighborhood for developing their business. Considerations:

- Project ideas that compete with - instead of complement - neighboring businesses may not be considered or may only be considered for a non-competitive location.
- Applicants must be flexible, recognizing the uncertain nature of operating under temporary leasing arrangements and be prepared to move to a new location if or when long-term paying tenants are identified. Project Storefronts seeks to negotiate with commercial landlords for 90 day no-rent leases with 30 day renewal options.
- A stipend of up to \$500 may be given to selected applicants for space build out including signage, lighting and other needs, based on final application, drawings and other submissions.
- Applicants must develop a formal Business Plan as part of the process. City of New Haven Small Business staff is available to assist with this and other small business questions.

- Successful applicants will be required to track visitors, sales and expenses and submit a monthly report.
- Successful applicants must provide short term general liability insurance and may be required to cover or share the cost of utilities depending on the project proposal and location. (City staff has information on low cost insurance options.)
- Storefront locations change according to availability. Site selection will be based on personal interviews between DCA staff, landlords and applicants according to space needs, project proposal and other considerations.
- Successful applicants will be selected on a 90-day trial basis with an opportunity for successive 90 day renewals. As entrepreneurs become increasingly secure and successful, they will be subject to additional requirements and possible small, incremental payments to help offset project costs.
- In Storefront locations assigned to only one applicant, that applicant must be prepared to keep their project open at least five days and two evenings a week, including one weekend day/evening. They are also responsible for all cleaning, trash removal, etc. In shared storefront locations, applicants may choose to share responsibilities for maintaining store hours, cleaning and other.

## **VI. INFORMATION SESSIONS**

Information sessions covering program details will be held periodically and applicants are encouraged to attend. Please contact Margaret Bodell, Project Storefronts Consultant at (203) 946-2895 for more information.

## **VII. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

A jury comprised of individuals from the City of New Haven and the New Haven Economic Development Corporation, with input from professional artists and arts administrators, will review qualifying applications and judge on the following:

### ***Selection Criteria***

- Overall Concept and Project Feasibility as represented in the Application, Proposed Budgets and other submitted materials.
- Quality of Project Proposal: Innovative ideas/concepts, potential for creating excitement, driving traffic, stimulating interest in the project and the neighborhood.
- How the applicant proposes to utilize, contemporize, innovate the space, including signage, lighting, furnishings, etc. to create interest and excitement about the project.
- Artistic merit and professional record of achievement, previous successes.
- Appropriateness of project for a temporary space.
- How the project proposes to engage the neighborhood and increase/generate foot traffic.

- Applicant's flexibility, agility and ability to adapt.

## VIII. TIMELINE

Applications will be reviewed in an ongoing basis, but in order to expedite Storefront activation quick turnaround is anticipated (2-4wks) depending on applicant response numbers.

## IX. SUBMISSION PROCESS

The following steps should be completed to be considered for a Storefront project.

- **STEP ONE:** FAMILIARIZE yourself with the Project Storefronts goals, eligibility requirements and the selection criteria. VISIT the current Project Storefronts site to experience it first-hand and SPEAK to current participants.
- **STEP TWO:** INVEST the time to explore whether you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Google "retail" and "small business" on the internet. There are lots of good sites that have information about small business and retail, starting with the U.S. Small Business Administration, [www.SBA.gov](http://www.SBA.gov). There is also good information on sites such as [www.about.com](http://www.about.com), [www.businessonmain.msn.com](http://www.businessonmain.msn.com), as well as current articles on the Wall Street Journal ([www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com)) and New York Times ([www.nyt.com](http://www.nyt.com)) sites.
- **STEP THREE:** DEVELOP your project concept more fully and begin to clarify your ideas. CONSIDER your ideal space requirements and other physical/fit out needs of your project concept. IDENTIFY your target audience and ways you might best promote and market your idea.
- **STEP FOUR:** ATTEND an information session (or meet with Project Storefronts and New Haven Economic Development Staff if info sessions are not immediately available) to get additional information, get questions answered, network with other potential applicants (you never know when you might meet someone with a similar idea with whom you can collaborate) and learn more about possible location details.
- **STEP FIVE:** DETERMINE whether your project/business idea would be a good fit for this program and if it is, COMPLETE and SUBMIT the application and required materials. Don't hesitate to e-mail us with questions as they arise.

## X. SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS

Each applicant is required to supply the following documentation:

- Signed Application form with sketches of proposed signage, storefront layout ideas, preliminary marketing plan and budgets
- Resume/CV outlining experience
- DVDs/CDs of relevant images
- Publicity of previous work
- Samples of products (if applicable)

All required application materials should be submitted in a folder. Folder and all contents should be labeled with applicant's business name (if applicable) and/or last name, first name, e-mail address, telephone and project concept title. Label each DVD/CD clearly with name and email address.

***Mail or Hand- Deliver to:***

New Haven Festivals Inc.  
Attn: Margaret Bodell  
c/o The City of New Haven  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
165 Church Street, 6th Floor  
New Haven, CT 06510

**NOTE:** There is no application fee, however, incomplete applications will not be considered. If you wish the return of any materials, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

**QUESTIONS?**

Please submit questions in writing to Margaret Bodell, Project Storefronts Consultant at [mmbodell@gmail.com](mailto:mmbodell@gmail.com).

**CONDITIONS FOR SUBMISSION**

***City's Rights Pertinent to this solicitation***

The City reserves the right to reject any responses to this solicitation that do not meet the selection criteria. Failure to provide any of the required application materials shall be cause for the submission to be rejected as non-responsive.

The City reserves the right to cancel this solicitation, in whole or in part, at any time without prior notice and makes no representation that any applicant will be selected to perform the work solicited. Additionally, the City reserves the right to postpone the opening of responses to this solicitation for its own convenience, and to waive minor informalities or irregularities in any responses received.

The City accepts no financial responsibility for any costs or expenses incurred by any applicant in responding to this solicitation. All submissions may be kept by the City as public record and may be disclosed to third parties upon request therefore.



# APPLICATION

## *Project Storefronts: Stimulating New Haven’s Creative Economy*

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicant Name	
Business Name (as proposed)	
Address	
Phone number	Alternate Phone Number
E-mail Address	
Website (if applicable)	

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title
Project Concept/Type of Merchandise
Minimum space requirements and space usage allocations, i.e. classroom storage, production, changing rooms, performance, displays, etc.)

### REFERENCES (minimum of one professional and one personal)

Name	Phone Number	E-mail	Relationship

### I. NARRATIVE

Please provide a multiple page description of your business idea and attach to the application. Please address the following questions:

**1. Your Concept:** What is your idea? Is it a product or a service? Is it unique and why do you think it will be successful? Is this a new or an evolution of an existing or former project? If previously tried, what was your last experience and what makes you think this time could be more successful?

**2. Market Analysis:** Who is your client or customer? How broad/large is your customer base? How much demand do you think there is for people to buy your product or service? Can you project how much you need to sell at what price to make a profit?

**3. Vision:** Ideas for businesses only intended to be temporary will be considered but only with an appropriate explanation. If this idea has been under consideration for some time or is something you have tried in the past, do you see this opportunity as a spring board for starting a permanent business?

**4. Location Needs/Considerations:** In what type of neighborhood would your idea work best? What opportunities/ideas do you envision for engaging the surrounding community? What would be your ideal space configuration and size?

## **II. BUDGET**

Please provide TWO BUDGETS for your project: (1) a “start-up” or fit-out costs budget which outlines the cost of setting up your business and (2) your best-guess as to an initial 3 month (90 day) “operating” budget which outlines estimated income (how much you think you can sell) and estimated expenses (how much you think it will cost you to operate your business). You should also consider developing a one year operating budget which would reflect the longer-term benefits of marketing/establishing yourself and your business. See Attached Budget Forms (pages 3 + 4)

## **III. DESIGN OF STOREFRONT SPACE**

Please attach a sketch of the proposed floor plan of your ideal store which includes the (1) optimal size and design/layout of the interior space of the store itself, including estimated needs for merchandise inventory and other storage, sales counter, equipment and/or furniture and (2) the exterior window frontage which should show ideas for storefront signage and merchandise/window displays.

## **IV. MARKETING AND PROMOTION PLAN**

Separately, outline your Marketing Plan. Marketing plan should include the following:

1. What are your selling points of your product/service? Why your project is a benefit to consumers (based on competitive business already in the marketplace)?
2. Who is your target audience and where do they live?
3. How will you reach your target audience to attract customers and promote your business?
4. How will you call attention to your business, and engage the neighborhood?
5. Project identity/logo concept or design
6. Operating Hours (must include at least two evenings and one weekend day)

## **V. RESUME/PREVIOUS WORK**

Please attach a resume or CV outlining your experience especially as it relates to the project you are proposing. Include any publicity received about you as an artist, other entrepreneurial endeavors or other relevant experience.

## **VI. PRODUCT SAMPLES**

Please include DVDs/CDs/Photos of your product or actual product samples for consideration, if applicable.

# OPERATING BUDGET FORM for 90 day or one year period (please circle one)

If attaching separate sheet, follow the format below.

<b>INCOME</b>		<b>Projected Cash Income</b>	
1. Anticipated Merchandise Sales/Service Fees			
2. Other Income (please list separately)			
<b>3. Total Projected Income</b>			
<b>EXPENSES</b>		<b>Projected Cash Cost (a)</b>	<b>Value of Donated Goods &amp; Services (b)</b>
<b>WAGES:</b>			
4. Staff (not including yourself)			
5. Employment Taxes			
6. Other Benefit Costs			
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS:</b>			
7. Computers/Other Office Machines			
8. Paper/Office Supplies			
9. Banking/Credit Card Fees			
10. Accounting Costs			
11. Business Registration/Filing Fees			
12. Cartage/Trash Removal Fees			
13. Telephone/Internet			
14. Cleaning/Other Supplies			
15. Insurance			
16. Utilities (gas, electric, water)			
17. Parking			
<b>MARKETING:</b>			
18. Graphic/Web Design			
19. Printed Materials (postcards, flyers, etc)			
20. Banners/Signage/Sandwich Boards			
21. Web/Social Networking			
22. Advertising (print, radio)			
<b>MERCHANDISE:</b>			
23. Inventory/Supplies			
24. Raw Materials			
25. Packaging/Wrapping/Bags			
26. Shipping & Handling			
<b>Other/Miscellaneous (please specify):</b>			
27. Other			

28a. Total Projected Expenses [Lines 4(a) thru 27(a) only]	(a)	
28b. Total Donated Goods & Services [lines 4(b) thru 27(b) only]		(b)
29. NET INCOME/LOSS (Line 3 – Line 24a)		

## BUILD-OUT/START-UP BUDGET

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Cash</b>	<b>Materials/Inventory on Hand</b>
1. Cash, materials on Hand		
2. Other Assets (please list separately)		
<b>3. Total Projected Start-up Funds</b>		
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>Projected Cash Cost (a)</b>	<b>Value of Donated Goods &amp; Services (b)</b>
<b>PHYSICAL SPACE BUILD-OUT COSTS:</b>		
4. Space Rental		
5. Business Equipment (computers, cash registers)		
6. Office/Store Supplies		
7. Furnishings (counters, displays, tables, chairs, shelving, etc.)		
8. Lighting		
9. Paint, Wall Coverings		
10. Flooring		
11. Storefront Signage		
<b>MERCHANDISE/INVENTORY</b>		
12. Beginning Inventory Cost/Value of Goods		
13. Raw Materials		
<b>OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS:</b>		
14. Other (please specify)		
<b>15 a. Total Projected Fit-out Expenses</b> [lines 4(a) thru 14(a) only]	(a)	
<b>15 b. Total Donated Goods &amp; Services</b> [lines 4(b) thru 14(b) only]		(b)

## CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Applicant Signature

Date