

Proposal to Potential Members - AI Safety Research, Education and Co-working Hub, Christchurch

A joint initiative from AISANZ, Nelson AI Sandbox and Epic Innovation

THE VISION

Christchurch's Responsible AI and AI Safety community is currently scattered: people working in this space mostly do so in isolation, often from home. This centre would give researchers, educators, students, small consulting businesses and the public a shared, permanent home in the heart of the city: a walk-in front door for meetups, workshops, hackathons and a national conference, where knowledge is shared instead of duplicated. The critical goal is to share how responsible AI adoption and safety can be a core economic driver for Christchurch.

THE PARTNERSHIP

AISANZ (Non-Profit)	Key Activities: Academic and stakeholder engagement, AI safety meetups, career advice, and the national AI safety conference admin
Nelson AI Sandbox (Charity)	Key Activities: Drop-in AI advice, workshops and hackathons, volunteer mobilisation, newsletters, and fiscal sponsorship for the Centre.
Epic Innovation	The physical home: workspace, meeting rooms, events venue and onsite facilities within its central Christchurch hub.

THE SPACE

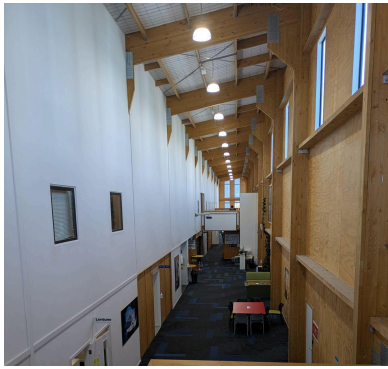
Epic Innovation's hub in central Christchurch would host the Centre (proposed storefront location pictured below), giving it a genuine street presence rather than a back-office arrangement.



Proposed storefront location, Epic Innovation, Christchurch



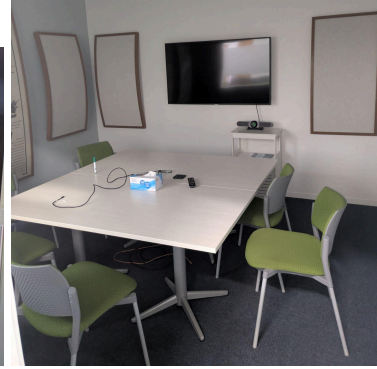
Private, Card Secure Space Open to Members and Hot Deskers



Hallway Co-Working



Events Centre (by prior arrangement)



Eight bookable meeting rooms



Kitchen and Breakout spaces

WHAT MEMBERS GET

- Hot desks and lockable personal space, alongside monthly and permanent desk options.
- Eight bookable meeting rooms (8–10 people) plus a large events space for up to 100 people.
- Breakout halls, communal tables, a kitchenette, high-speed wifi and after-hours access.
- A ready-made community: regular events, visiting researchers and speakers, and a direct line into the AI Safety and Responsible AI communities

WHAT WE'RE AIMING FOR

- Get funding approved by Mid September and to open the Centre's doors on 1 November 2026.
- Hold a public launch event to introduce the Centre to Christchurch.
- Build a founding base of committed members across casual, monthly and permanent arrangements.
- Establish the Centre as a template that could be replicated in other New Zealand cities.

HOW IT'S FUNDED

Desk fees alone won't cover the space in its first year, and we're going into this with our eyes open about that. The bare minimum to hire the space is \$30,000 NZD per year. (With ideally a staffed member - provided by AISANZ or Nelson AI Sandbox to do community engagement and ensure the space is fully staffed during working hours).

The partnership plans to seek philanthropic and grant funding to substantially subsidise membership costs, on the basis of the wider value the centre creates for Christchurch. This means member pricing is still being finalised, and we'd rather get that right with potential member input than lock it in early.

QUESTIONS WE NEED ANSWERED FROM POTENTIAL MEMBERS

- Would you be interested in committing to a workspace like this, starting November 2026, ideally coming in at least once per week?
- What would be financially feasible for you or your organisation to contribute to the space, and would casual, monthly or quarterly subscription suit you best?
- Would public visibility such as having your organisations or logo displayed and associated with a dedicated AI safety hub in media outreach add value for you?
- Would access to meeting rooms, event spaces and co-working alongside other AI professionals add value?