

Creative



North East

Cultural Sector Update  
7<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Declan Baharini

Creative Fuse North East (CFNE) provides opportunities for sole traders, micro businesses, SMEs and larger organisations from the cultural sector across the region to benefit from a wide range of innovation support delivered by 5 universities and in partnership with the Creative, Digital and IT sector.

The best way to stay informed is to [sign up on the CFNE website here](#) and be sure to tick all three boxes to be added to the CFNE opportunities database, get the monthly newsletter and be invited to events.

This update is prepared by Declan Baharini, CFNE Cultural Sector Engagement Broker. It provides summary information and links to the latest Fuse opportunities, support and learning of relevance to the cultural sector. It is emailed to cultural partnership and cultural/artform network leads and through Arts Council England NE, to be shared with broadest range of cultural operators in the region.

**Eligibility for activities:** *Depending on what funding is supporting them, the activities and business/individual involvement is either in one of the two Local Enterprise Areas (NELEP covers Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear and the rest of the region is part of the Tees Valley LEP area) or across both LEP areas, i.e. regional.*

## 1) EVENTS

**(Regional) 10.30am-12.30pm 9<sup>th</sup> Nov: Future Fashion CAKE event at Northern Design Centre, Gateshead**

[Register here for your free place, event details and directions](#)

This open event will be showcasing the work of local fashion designers, looking at how fashion is adapting to the digital age and examining ethical and environmentally approaches to design. It will also explore connections between wearable tech and health and well-being and consider how the region's fashion heritage is being preserved and shared with wider audiences. There will also be an interactions gallery where designers, makers and fashion students can showcase their work. Speakers include Jen Barrett (This is Creative Enterprise), Sally Smallwood (Wreckreation), Nick Spencer and Raymond Oliver (Northumbria University)

**(Tees Valley) 9am-1pm 30<sup>th</sup> Nov: Creative Fuse Tees Valley – Launch and Mixer Event at The Curve T2.11, Teesside University** [Register here for your free place, details and directions](#)

Calling all cultural, heritage, creative digital and IT businesses, freelancers and artists based in Tees Valley – this launch event is for you and will introduce you to Fuse opportunities available. There are lots of ways to get involved, from accessing funding, business innovation support and specialist advice, to networking and getting together with cultural and creative businesses to add value, share best practice and encourage innovative ways of working. This launch event is one in a series of activities led by Creative Fuse Tees Valley, which is delivered by Teesside University and is partnership between CFNE and Innovate Tees Valley.

**(Regional) 5pm-7pm, 7<sup>th</sup> December Christmas CAKE at Breeze Creatives, Bamburgh House, Newcastle**

[Register here for your free place](#)

Cultural businesses, freelancers, artists are invited to join colleagues from the Creative, Digital and IT sector and academics for a drink and a chance to share news of new developments, bringing innovative new ideas, events and opportunities to the region. We will have a [Pecha Kucha style](#) session, with quick fire presentations and a selection box of creative ideas to inspire guests.

**Call for speakers** We already have some great speakers, but if you have a new idea, project, business or event or opportunity you want to share contact [Faye Harland](#) with your name, company name (if applicable) and a brief summary of what you'd like to share

## 2) BUSINESS INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

**(Tees Valley) Tees Valley business innovation support and opportunities** will be launched at an event at Teesside University in Middlesbrough on 30<sup>th</sup> November (see Events) and details of support will be shared through this bulletin after that event. [Click here to find out more and register for the event](#)

**(NELEP) Get Ready to Innovate:** Do you have a big idea that could help your business, but are in need of time and expertise to develop your plans? Join Get Ready to Innovate, which will help agile and adaptive small businesses to tackle these issues. The Creative Fuse team at Northumbria University will help you:

- develop new ideas, concepts, products, services, strategies within a concentrated time period
- consider new ways of working, supported by our innovation tools and approaches
- evoke change within your organisation.

Get Ready to Innovate is a fully funded activity led by the Northumbria University Creative Fuse team. Through 12 hours of action-focused intervention over 4 sessions, Get Ready to Innovate offers SMEs and registered sole traders the opportunity to develop their potential for innovation, understand and overcome barriers and challenges. This programme builds on Northumbria University's design and innovation practice, and takes a design-led approach.

During face-to-face sessions, a team of expert practitioners will use innovation tools to help you challenge your current thinking, investigate blind-spots, and generate new opportunities to create value. The sessions include two Design Sprints that work as catalysts for change and inspiration for innovation. In these fast-paced events you will work alongside our innovation team to explore your organisations challenges and opportunities; take part in collaborative activities to develop rich insights; and find early-stage solutions to the problems you face.

[Click here to register for Get Ready to Innovate](#) or contact [Elena Gorman](#) to find out more

**(NELEP) Digital Literature: Coming soon** This fully-funded opportunity is available to creative writing SMEs and registered sole traders from the public, private, or voluntary sector. Led by Northumbria University, the Digital Literature programme will provide a range of opportunities for creative writers in the North East of England. The programme will include a series of seminars, mentoring, and online resources to:

- equip writers with the practical skills and broader competencies that will enable them to create and build their own brand digitally;
- equip writers with the knowledge that they need to develop, market and sell their work through digital platforms and with digital partners;
- develop a resource bank of advice and guidance that keeps pace with development in digital technologies.

The programme will cover aspects such as: understanding the industry; audience development; understanding technology within the specific context of writing; developing practical skills with digital technologies. This will include content on areas such as: vlogs; blogs; podcasts; audio books; crowd funding; developing websites; and popular systems such as Wordpress. A variety of different forms of support of varying lengths will be available so that organisations can engage with the programme in various ways.

Further details will be made available to organisations that express an interest.

To register your interest, please contact Dr Elena Gorman: [northumbria@creativefusene.org.uk](mailto:northumbria@creativefusene.org.uk)

**(NELEP) Creative Connections: Creative Enterprise Innovation** : This programme of support is led and designed by the Creative Fuse team at Newcastle University Business School. Aimed at sole traders, micro-businesses, and SMEs in the Creative or Cultural Sectors, Creative Connections offers both "Createathon" business-support workshops and [student placements](#).

[Feedback from the first Createathon in September is online here](#)

### 3) PLACEMENT SCHEMES

**(NELEP) Interactive Media Design Student Placements:** Northumbria University is seeking to work with a wide range of businesses including public or private sector organisations, cultural and creative sector, start-ups, charities, design companies and technology companies. Northumbria University's talented students are offering a design service to help you initiate a range of digital media projects including: Website design, App design, Games design. Note that demand is likely to be high. Placements are likely to take place between mid-March and mid-May 2018.

Academic staff will work with organisations to develop a project brief that will address a business need specific to your organisation. They will then identify a small group of 3-4 Interactive Media Design students with relevant knowledge and skills to work on the project. Through this, they can help to:

- increase capacity to research and prototype new products and services
- explore new markets, customers, and audiences
- build a new brand, visual identity, and communications strategy
- tap into the latest academic thinking and expertise
- develop new resources and materials
- get fresh, creative and innovative insights

Flexibility is at the heart of this scheme:

- depending on the project, the student group could be hosted on site within your organisation or they could work remotely and communicate with you through orientation meetings, Q&A sessions, Skype, email, and feedback sessions.
- the projects might take place full-time over a period of 4 weeks, or part-time over a longer period
- our students can work on concrete projects (such as designing a new brand or website), or blue skies projects to visualise new products and emerging opportunities.

[Click here to find out more](#) and contact [northumbria@creativefusene.org.uk](mailto:northumbria@creativefusene.org.uk) to register interest

**(NELEP) Creative Fuse Placement Programme:** The University of Sunderland Team will help you recruit talented graduates to support organisations develop innovation capacity and expertise. They will work closely with you to develop the project and manage the recruitment process. Working with their academics, they will source the 'right fit' graduate to meet your needs. The project can fulfill a need you have already identified, or be developed alongside our academic staff. The University of Sunderland will support the graduate placement and your organisation during the project.

Placements average 10-12 weeks (can be longer or shorter) and graduates are paid £1200 per month by the scheme. Arts, creative, cultural, digital and tech businesses (under 250 employees), freelancers and artists in Northumberland, Durham and Tyne & Wear can benefit from placements, which cover all curriculum and programme areas, including arts, creative, media, digital and technology disciplines, but could also come from business, law, psychology etc., providing opportunities for cross-over of knowledge and expertise. Placements will support a broad range of activity, including, but not exclusively:

- Management/leadership support and organisational or capacity development
- Corporate and social responsibility
- Helping an organisation with access to new supply chains, and new markets
- Marketing and communications, audience/customer engagement
- Innovation and commercialisation of R&D
- Design-led and creative projects that help the organisation to develop new thinking, capacity, etc
- Development of new products and services

[Click here to find out more](#) and to register interest contact: [Suzy O'Hara](#), Creative Fuse Innovation Development Executive: 07891 719 319 or [Mark Adamson](#), Creative Fuse Institutional Lead: 07956 499 257

**(NELEP) Creative and Cultural Industries Placements:** Northumbria University are offering their new 12-week placements to SMEs in the creative and cultural sectors. Hosts will have the opportunity to work with the innovative and enterprising postgraduates on Northumbria's MA programme in Creative and Cultural Industries Management to:

- Develop an idea or concept that could help your business grow
- Consider and test new ways of working
- increase your capacity to address a specific creative project
- engage with new opportunities, markets and audiences
- develop or test a new product or service
- get fresh, creative and innovative insights
- tap into the latest academic thinking and expertise in this rapidly developing sector

Before the placement begins, academic staff will work with you to develop a project brief that will address a business need specific to your organisation. They will then identify a talented postgraduate who has the relevant knowledge and skills to work on the project. Throughout the placement, academic staff will support the student and have an input to the project as it progresses. Placements will begin in January 2018.

To find out more or register interest contact Dr Elena Gorman at [northumbria@creativefusene.org.uk](mailto:northumbria@creativefusene.org.uk)

**(NELEP) Creative Connections Placement Scheme:** Aimed at sole traders, micro-businesses, and SMEs in the creative or cultural sectors. 6 days intensive support from an experienced postgraduate student. The student will respond to an organisation's project brief, produced in consultation with the Creative Connections team at Newcastle University Business School. [Click here to register interest](#)

#### 4) HOTHOUSE PROJECTS

**(NELEP) Hothouse Innovation Programme:** Placing emerging undergraduate talent within 'real-world' scenarios in a business or organisation who is keen to access capacity or expertise to deliver a short project. A student team will work to a project brief, supported and overseen by University of Sunderland academics. Projects will be designed as a 'fast response' task and finish projects, with delivery typically lasting 5 to 10 days, dependent on the needs of the project and business. This quick turnaround can provide a business with accessible creative and innovative insight, and a cost-effective resource to address their needs.

Project briefs are likely to be quite broad-ranging, from design-led projects, creative catalyst and ideas generation, to digital media and creative-based briefs. The programme helps to support creative practice and innovation, stimulating new thinking and providing access to valuable expertise. Briefs will be set with clear parameters and outcomes identified from the start to ensure that expectations are managed and met, with relevant academic oversight incorporated. It is anticipated that this strand of activity will provide for a rich range of case studies that:

- help to articulate what creative practice and innovation looks like for emerging talent, supporting future graduate retention and sector employment
- identify the benefits and value of engaging and utilising knowledge, approaches, and experiences of younger talent to foster innovation and potentially disruptive thinking for SMEs
- provides businesses and organisations with accessible creative and innovative input on a time-limited basis helping them to acquire cost-effective resource to address particular short-term and fast-turn around business needs

[Click here to find out more](#) and to register interest contact: [Suzy O'Hara](#), Creative Fuse Innovation Development Executive: 07891 719 319 or [Mark Adamson](#), Creative Fuse Institutional Lead: 07956 499 257

## 5) FUSE NEWS – UPDATES ON ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY

**(Regional) Innovation Funding: Pilot and Development Grants** This call closed on 16<sup>th</sup> October and there were 88 submissions for innovation funding and support, including a good spread involving cultural organisations, artists and practitioners. They will aim to tackle specific industry challenges, opportunities or barriers to growth. There will be an announcement soon about what proposals were successful. Some of these will be presenting at the [Christmas CAKE event on 7<sup>th</sup> December](#) and as projects make progress and report results, as part of the cultural sector engagement and dissemination programme under CFNE, learning from those involving cultural organisations and practitioners will be disseminated across the cultural sector.

**(Regional) Cyber wellbeing solution hack: Find out more about what happened** on 24<sup>th</sup> October at this event led by Northumbria University's Fuse Team. The day was designed to accelerate fused innovation between the public sector, academia and start-up business talent to identify solutions to a pressing social issue associated with the digital age – cybercrime. Teams consisting of local IT and software businesses, designers, university researchers and Northumbria Police Cadets worked together to explore challenges for young people, teachers and parents are faced with when using the internet and then generated potential solutions and ideas.

**(NELEP) Creative Connections Createathon: Find out what happened** at the first round of Createathon events at Newcastle University Business School from the perspective of one of the participants, Mandy Barker, Creative Director of Sail Creative. Consisting of two days of intensive workshops and presentations, the event is designed to provide entrepreneurs in creative businesses the opportunity to work alongside Masters level students to use innovative tools and develop their business strategies.

## 6) LINKED OPPORTUNITIES and INFORMATION

**VentureFest North East 2017 8.30am-5.30pm 14<sup>th</sup> Nov at St James' Park, Newcastle** VentureFest is a free event focussing on how businesses can grow through innovation, designed to connect business, corporates, investors, academics and advisors with specific expertise in innovation. It features high profile speakers, in-depth workshops and one to one coaching sessions with innovation experts and the opportunity to pitch ideas to leading investors and seed funders. Part of the Innovation Super Network Programme for the NE.

**Creative Industries Cluster and NE Proposal** The Arts and Humanities Research Council will invest £80m in 8 Research and Development partnerships, building on existing creative clusters in the UK from October 2018. Creative Fuse NE partners submitted an initial expression of interest in October and a final application will be submitted by 7<sup>th</sup> December.

## 7) FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT

If you have questions about any of these activities or want links into the universities, do get in touch with me.

Declan Baharini  
[Cultural Sector Engagement Broker](#)  
Creative Fuse North East  
07787 425 529  
[declanbaharini@talktalk.net](mailto:declanbaharini@talktalk.net)

Creative Fuse North East is supported by:



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

