

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.

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.*

In this week's edition there are opportunities to find out more or get involved in events and business innovation workshops across the region, as well as take up the offer of student, graduate and postgraduate projects, support or placements. Further details on all these opportunities are available in the update:

- TV [Creative Fuse Tees Valley 30th November, Middlesbrough](#) launching the range of offers and support
- [Christmas CAKE on 7th December](#) invites you to join a festive networking event looking forward to 2018
- NELEP [Creative Connections Createathon on 22nd and 28th January \(APPLY BY 30th NOV\)](#) explore business challenges, access new tools and develop action plans with Newcastle Uni Business School postgraduates
- NELEP [B2B Connect and Innovate Workshops \(16th and 23rd March 2018 – APPLY BY 31st JANUARY\)](#) an opportunity for small creative enterprises to work with business managers from larger organisations
- NELEP [Get Ready to Innovate](#) Northumbria is keen to work cultural organisations on business challenges and opportunities in an action-focussed series of sessions with a multi-disciplinary team
- NELEP [Digital Business Innovation Programme](#) for digital, tech and creative sector companies to explore business challenges with like-minded companies to explore new ideas and solutions – the first event is [Time out to Innovate 9am-5pm on 30th November](#) in Sunderland
- NELEP Digital Literature coming soon with opportunities for creative writers to build digital skills capacity, brands and digital marketing competences
- NELEP [Interactive Media Design Student Placements](#) University of Northumbria is offering a design service to organisations with digital projects, including website design, games design, app design
- NELEP [Creative Fuse Placement Programme](#) University of Sunderland's talented students or graduates will be paired with companies for short term flexible projects/placements to develop/test new products or services, engage with/research new markets and audiences, support design-led thinking
- NELEP Creative and Cultural Industries Placements: 12-week postgraduate placements from Northumbria
- NELEP Creative Connections Placements: Limited number of 6-day postgraduate placements
- NELEP [Hothouse programme](#) where a team of talented students from the University of Sunderland will work with you on a project brief around business challenges to deliver fast turnaround solutions
- TENDER: [Digital Media \(deadline noon 6th Dec\)](#): Design agency to work on Northumbria's Interactive Media Student Placement programme to create prototype digital products/communications for clients
- TENDER: [Social Media \(deadline noon 6th Dec\)](#): Designer for illustration project, designing content and templates for two social media campaigns, two illustrated books around homelessness and sexual violence against women

1) EVENTS

(Tees Valley) 9am-1pm 30th 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, 7th 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.

2) BUSINESS INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

(NELEP) [Creative Connections](#) is a programme to support sole traders, micro businesses and SMEs in the Creative and cultural sectors, designed and delivered by the Newcastle University Business School Creative Fuse Team with the aim of giving people the time, tools and guidance to reflect on business needs and build and action plan through a series of targeted workshops and support.

There are three strands of activity:

- [Creative Connections Createathon on 22nd and 28th January 2018 \(APPLY BY 30th NOVEMBER\)](#) Workshops for small creative enterprises interesting in developing their business. An opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities with talented Newcastle University Business School postgraduates who will work with the organisation to drive innovation and build resilience in the business, signpost to support and advice and provide new tools to help developments, as well as a business action plan. One of a series of workshops running in 2018
- [B2B Connect and Innovate Workshops \(16th and 23rd March 2018 – APPLY BY 31st JANUARY\)](#) For small creative enterprises interested in working with a business manager from a larger organisation, through an intensive two-day workshop to explore innovation and build resilience in the business, build contacts and get new tools
- **Student Placement Scheme** A limited number of short term placements to pair up postgraduates from Newcastle University Business School with a creative or cultural business to work on a specific project

(Tees Valley) Tees Valley business innovation support and opportunities will be launched at an event at Teesside University in Middlesbrough on 30th 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, it 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 Business Innovation Programme for sole traders, microbusinesses and SMEs in the digital, tech and creative sectors. Led by Software City and Digital Union working with the Newcastle University Creative Fuse Team, this programme is designed to support businesses explore big ideas or challenges, to work with like minded companies to explore new ideas and solutions in a group environment, through workshops and events. For digital and tech businesses, creative businesses, games developers, software developers and inhouse developers or IT specialists from other sectors.

To register for the first workshop, click on this link: [Time out To Innovate will take place 9am-5pm on 30th November](#) at Sunderland Software Centre

(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

Coming soon:

- Artist Innovation Programme
- Digital Literature Programme
- Cultural Business Innovation Workshops
- Rural Business Innovation Support Programme (Northumberland)

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 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 SMEs in the creative and cultural sectors new 12-week placements. Hosts will have the opportunity to work with the innovative and enterprising postgraduates on the 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

(NELEP) Creative Connections Placement Scheme: Aimed at sole traders, micro-businesses, and SMEs in the creative or cultural sectors. A limited number of placements are available, comprising 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) TENDER OPPORTUNITIES

People interested in these tenders must register as user on the ProContract portal – both to find out more detail and to submit proposals. [You can register for free here](#)

Digital Media (deadline noon 6th Dec): Call for a Design agency to work on Northumbria's Interactive Media Student Placement programme to create prototype digital products/communications for clients. The clients and their project requirements are to be determined but they may include the creation of design specifications, demo websites, apps, animations, etc. with a view to potential full-production. The aim is to stimulate growth and generate new business for both the clients and partner agency. The University's contribution to the project will involve sixteen undergraduate interaction designers working in smaller teams on these projects. They will be supported by two lecturers with specialisms in interaction and digital design. Estimated value: £10,000

[Click here for further details](#)

Social Media (deadline noon 6th Dec): Designer for illustration project, designing content and templates for two social media campaigns, two illustrated books around homelessness and sexual violence against women, working with students from the illustration pathway of Northumbria's Graphic Design degree and with two charitable organisations. This forms the content for two social media campaigns with charitable organisations, provoking dialogues in the North East of England. The first organisation's campaign will challenge the stigma of the complex needs of vulnerable homeless people, by using five graphic novel narratives based on two of their clients' experiences. The second organisation's campaign following on from the other will focus on a dialogue around addressing sexual violence against women. Estimated value £10,000

[Click here for further details](#)

6) NEWS AND UPDATES

Future Fashion CAKE 9th November: What springs to mind if you combine fashion and technology? How about Fashion and academia? Or even fashion and the North East? CAKE 13: Future Fashion was Creative Fuse's November Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange event. The presentations, demonstration and discussion that took place powerfully challenged any preconceptions of clunky smartwatches, elbow patches and the aversion to wearing coats at nighttime. [Click on the link](#) to find out what happened on #FuseCAKE – the tweeted reflections of the Creative Fuse CAKE community.

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

Creative Fuse North East is supported by:

