

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

## CLICK ON THE LINKS TO REGISTER FOR ACTIVITIES or FIND OUT MORE

Activities are fully funded, but time limited. Eligibility for activities is shown for those registered in the NELEP area (Durham, Northumberland, Newcastle, Gateshead, N. Tyneside, S. Tyneside, Sunderland), Tees Valley or are regional and open to all.

[Sign up on the CFNE website here to get the latest news and updates directly](#)

## REGISTER (FREE) FOR CREATIVE FUSE CONFERENCE 10-11<sup>th</sup> JULY & LAST CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS (21<sup>st</sup> May)

[Register for your free ticket to the Creative Fuse NE conference on 10-11th July at Discovery Museum, Newcastle:](#)

An exciting line up of presentations, panel discussions, workshops and performances from a fusion of businesses, academics and creative practitioners reflecting on our Creative Fuse journey, sharing knowledge, providing inspiration and discussing cross sector collaboration and innovation. We will also find out about the future of academic, creative and digital fusion for the creative economy and ecology in the region.

[Final call for contributions: Presentations, panel discussions, workshops, performances](#) (deadline noon 21st May)

## INNOVATION PILOTS AT THE HALFWAY STAGE

Creative Fuse NE provided funding to 31 Innovation Pilots at the end of last year, enabling SMEs, freelancers from the cultural or creative digital and IT sectors to team up with researchers from at least 2 of our 5 regional universities and propose ground-breaking projects. Themes include: Building Social Change; CDIT Health and Wellbeing; Digital Heritage; Digital Revolution; Future Cities; Smart Data Innovation; and Immersive Innovation. Now halfway through, last week 24 of the Innovation Pilot teams came together to talk about where they are, what's happening now and what's on the horizon. [Click here for the blog post from the event and find out more.](#)

## EVENTS COMING UP IN JUNE

**Regional** [Creative Marketing CAKE event: 2.30-4.30, Tuesday 5th June, College of St Hild and St Bede, Durham](#)

This Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange (CAKE) event will explore creative and innovative approaches to marketing, as part of Art Durham. Speakers will approach the theme from different perspectives: from expertise in marketing in the arts from Durham University Business School; hands-on advice on how to make marketing more creative from specialist business writing company Concision; and a new network of creative businesses as part of the Auckland Castle project.

**Tees Valley (and regional)** [Step Change Innovation Symposium, 9am-3.30pm 20<sup>th</sup> June at CPED \(Teesside University, Darlington\)](#) For freelancers and SMEs in Tees Valley and the wider North East who are interested in gaining innovation tools and techniques and learning from those who have successfully harnessed their creative potential, designed new products and services and positively influenced their own and organisation's innovation culture. The symposium blends hands-on workshops with short talks from leading innovation specialists and will be a practical introduction to innovation in a small to medium sized business context. It is delivered for businesses by businesses and in partnership with the Design Council, with access to longer term business innovation support.

**Regional [Art, Design and Innovation CAKE event: 11am-1pm, 22nd June at The Boiler House, Newcastle University Campus](#)** In association with the North East Contemporary Visual Arts Network and on the launch day of Great Exhibition of the North, this event showcases the best of the North East's talent, with expert speakers representing the three themes of the Exhibition: Art, Design and Innovation. We will explore the importance of UX design, discussing businesses who provide innovative and enjoyable design experiences, as well as considering innovation in XR, with an insight into hedgehog lab's VR/AR project 'Rocket Re-imagined'. Speakers include: Helena Hill - Managing Director, 49digital and Shaun Allan: Director of Immersive Technologies, hedgehog lab.

**Call for Lightning Talks (deadline 8<sup>th</sup> June):** At CAKE, we'd like to showcase the exciting projects that will be taking place in the region over the course of the Great Exhibition and beyond. If you're working on something new, looking for collaborators, or running a great workshop, gallery show or event, [click here to apply](#) to give a two-minute lightning talk to help spread the word to a new, cross-sector audience.

**Tees Valley - hold the date: Rise and Design 28<sup>th</sup> June, Redcar** Taking our inspiration from [Design Network North's](#) successful networking and discussion events, Creative Fuse Tees Valley teamed up with [RTC North](#) to devise a special programme that will tap into the unique expertise, challenges and opportunities of Tees Valley businesses in a session which is inclusive, engaging and energising. The second Creative Fuse Tees Valley Rise & Design event will be announced shortly.

## BUSINESS INNOVATION ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT

- **Tees Valley [Creative Fuse Tees Valley's programme](#)** of activities is being delivered in partnership with Innovate Tees Valley. [Click here to find out about this and other opportunities through Innovate Tees Valley](#)
- **Tees Valley [Graduate Consultancy Programme](#):** 30 businesses will benefit from working with a team of university staff and talented graduates over 4 weeks to embed a product or process innovation.
- **NELEP [Get Ready to Innovate](#)** 12 hours of action-packed support across 3 sessions with Northumbria's Fuse team, to equip you with a fresh perspective on your challenges and opportunities, with support to: start developing new ideas, concepts, products, services, strategies; experience new ways of working, supported by our innovation tools and approaches. [Visit the link and see a film](#) explaining what it's all about and what people think about it. The activity can be delivered flexibly one-to-one with those interested.
- **NELEP [Digital Literature](#)** New Writing North leads this activity to support creative writers to build digital skills capacity, brands and digital marketing competences. Remaining activities include: [Digi Create conference 11am-4pm 26<sup>th</sup> May at Live Theatre](#) A day-long conference exploring creative ways writers are using digital technologies and distribution to develop their work and engage audiences; and Digi\_Resources: Toolkits, advice and guidance materials launch in Autumn 2018, building on [New Writing North's existing resources](#)
- **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
- **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 for 5-10 days to deliver fast turnaround solutions
- **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

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT

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Creative Fuse North East is supported by:

