

Creative

FUSE

North East

Cultural Sector Update

13th December 2017

Declan Baharini, Cultural Sector Engagement Broker

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.

In this week's edition, Northumberland, Durham and Tees Valley activities are all starting up, alongside the ongoing business innovation support and placements available across the NELEP area in the north of the region. Read on for summaries and links on this page and more information in the rest of the update.

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.*

- Two events in the new year are on Digital Archives: [CAKE 15: Digital Archives 3-5pm on Thursday 25th January in Newcastle](#) exploring the relation between digital and print and different ways of experiencing text; and **'New era for Digital Archives: Impactful initiatives down to the roots of business and heritage in the North East' 2-6 pm 7th February 2018**, Grey College, Durham University, launching the Digital Archive initiative
- **Tees Valley** Creative Fuse launched in November with a range of support available to cultural, creative, digital and IT freelancers and businesses in the TV LEP area, starting with an Innovate Tees Valley Culture Hub, awareness and showcase events in the new year, business diagnostic, consultancy, placements and more
- **Durham** is launching its Fuse activities in January – [sign up for the launch event on 24th January](#) at the Business School and find out more about their culture hubs approach to supporting small craft, cultural and creative businesses in rural areas, as well as the potential for student placements
- **Northumberland** only: [Rural Cultural Business Innovation Programme](#): recruiting cultural, craft and creative businesses now for two days initial support activities in Alnwick (5th and 26th Feb) and Hexham (6th and 27th Feb) to learn & apply effective approaches to product & service development & project management
- **NELEP** [Creative Connections Createathon on 22nd and 28th January](#) 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
- **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
- **NELEP** [Digital Literature](#) coming soon with opportunities for creative writers to build digital skills capacity, brands and digital marketing competences (click on the link to register interest)
- **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

1) EVENTS

CAKE 15: Digital Archives 3-5pm on Thursday 25th January in Newcastle Exploring the relationship between digital and print and different ways of understanding and experiencing text. Speakers will draw on the work being done by Animating Text at Newcastle University (exploring text using digital editing techniques to fuse humanities, social science research and computer science. The archive will be examined as a collaborative space, looking at the Digital Women's Archive North work around disrupting digital society and creating spaces where marginalised groups can have their voices heard. Written and artistic responses to the digital archive will be considered. Speakers include Jennifer Richards (Joseph Cowan Professor of English Literature at Newcastle), Jenna Ashton (Creative Director, Digital Women's Archive) and Steve Ronnie (freelance Writer and Artist). [Click here to register for your free place](#) (venue will be confirmed in December).

New era for Digital Archives: Impactful initiatives down to the roots of business and heritage in the North East - 2-6 pm 7th February 2018, Grey College, Durham University (register by 10th January): The first Digital Archive initiative will be launched February 7th, 2018 to enable invitees to be far more immersed in the possibilities for the combined future of heritage and industry in the North East. The event is designed to bring together experts in their various fields who have never been in the same room before and to be guided by marrying advanced technical and commercial capabilities with a deep appreciation of the region's heritage complexities. The afternoon, led by researchers Dr Mariann Hardey (Durham) and Dr Nancy Bell (Northumbria/National Archives), will be spent undertaking imaginative problem-solving exercises to enable new growth and experimentation at the trunk of culture, science, technology, innovation and commercial enterprise. This is a rare opportunity for a unique interaction whether as a heritage expert, commercial provider, trained specialist or researcher and to lead on contributing to a new set of discoveries and collaborations. Spaces are limited. Register your interest and reserve your place by emailing the CFNE Durham Team at alistair.brown@durham.ac.uk or t.l.cockshut@durham.ac.uk by January 10, 2018.

Durham University and CAKE in 2018: Durham will be hosting two of the regionwide Creative FUSE NE CAKE (Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange) events in 2018: "Music and Sound" at Durham Castle on February 8th and "Marketing Futures" on July 12th. Invitations will go out in early 2018 for these exciting learning and networking events, so please make sure you have [signed up on the contact page](#) for notification of CAKE events.

2) DURHAM LAUNCHES ITS FUSE ACTIVITIES

NELEP, especially DURHAM Growing Creativity and Culture: Creative FUSE NE Activities hosted by Durham University in 2018. There is a robust menu on offer of funded options to support cultural, creative, digital and IT SMEs working in the NELEP area including: focused, short-term Durham University student placements shaped around a creative or digital SME's bespoke needs; a range of pertinent and timely hands-on workshops drawing on Durham expertise and research knowledge and held across the County; and a residential programme for creatives built in and around Durham itself.

January 24, 2018, 4-6 pm, "Growing Creativity and Culture in 2018", Creative FUSE NE's Durham University Team Launch Event at Durham Business School. Attend the launch to learn more about the exciting suite of activities planned in 2018 and get involved. The launch event includes an overview of Durham's activities, a chance to network, and a special 1:1 triage session for attending SMEs to shape the support around their specific needs. This event is particularly critical for those SMEs in the creative, heritage, cultural, or digital/IT sector wanting to work with or through the Durham Fuse team in 2018. Coffee, tea and cake will be served. [Click here to register for the event](#)

Introducing: Culture Hubs at Durham University (February to September 2018). The Culture Hubs scheme responds to the needs of the creative, arts and crafts economy by bringing help close to home. Away from urban centres, the North East's creative economy is rural and small traders can feel especially isolated. Our programmes will be run out of regional cultural 'hubs' -museums, craft centres, enterprise space, galleries etc.-drawing together like-minded practitioners and businesses for support. These fully-funded activities are designed and delivered by the Creative Fuse team based at Durham University. We offer two different activity strands through

Culture Hubs: **Bespoke workshops, and Student Placements.** Placements will be shaped around the particular needs of each creative/digital SME. Workshops will cover themes including: social media and digital presence; creativity; generating funding; and how to plan your own creative workshops. More information about venues, dates, and sign-ups will be available in January.

Durham University and CAKE in 2018: Durham will be hosting two of the regionwide Creative FUSE NE CAKE events in 2018: “Music and Sound” at Durham Castle on February 8th and “Marketing Futures” on July 12th. Invitations will go out to those registered for updates in early 2018 for these exciting learning and networking events. [Click here to sign up for news of CAKE events](#) via the Fuse website.

Digital Archives: Durham is also supporting a Digital Archives project under the innovation funding strand of Fuse and will be holding an event on 7th February (see Events, section 1)

If you have questions about any of these activities or if you’d like to meet with the Durham Fuse Team outside of these events, please do get in touch with either Dr Alistair Brown (alistair.brown@durham.ac.uk) or Dr Ladan Cockshut (t.l.cockshut@durham.ac.uk). They’d love to hear from you.

3) CREATIVE FUSE TEES VALLEY LAUNCHED

Tees Valley Creative Fuse Tees Valley launched in Middlesbrough on 30th November. The team shared information about what activities, core services and support will be available for cultural, creative, Digital and IT companies based within the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, namely Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-On-Tees local authority areas.

Innovate Tees Valley Culture Hub: Building a community of interest. Blending many project strands and many partners. An online accelerator to access innovation resources and support to grow your creative enterprise. Access 24/7 professional and peer support. **Starting with ...awareness and showcasing events (Co created with Rise Design/RTC Events - quarterly in 2018)** themed by industry sectors. Event ideas and contributions welcome.

How: Addressing barriers to growth through innovation:

- Consulting (broker matches)
- Networking (additional events)
- Building Capacity (graduate placements)
- Resources – Launchpad space/expertise and wider University facilities (test/develop new products)
- Knowledge transfer - academic inputs and research collaborations
- Case studies (a showcase hosted on Hub)
- Role models (speakers at events)

What next?

- **Contact the Creative Fuse Tees Valley Team for a chat as to how you might benefit and/or contribute**
- **Free individual/company diagnostic** – filtered recruitment approach to identify innovation challenges within industry and SMES with growth potential to develop solutions: new products and services. Activity in close collaboration with Innovate Tees Valley Partners

Further details and links will be available in January, but for further information and to sign up for news, contact the Team on 01642 738726 or email:

- Wendy Parvin – Innovation Manager w.parvin@tees.ac.uk
- Corinne Templeman – Business Development Manager c.templeman@tees.ac.uk
- Samuel Murray – FUSE Research Associate Sam.Murray@tees.ac.uk
- Sarah Panayi – Project Administrator s.panayi@tees.ac.uk
- Sharon Paterson – Teesside University Institutional lead s.paterson@tees.ac.uk

4) BUSINESS INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Northumberland Rural Cultural Business Innovation Programme This is an exciting opportunity for cultural, craft and creative businesses and registered sole traders in Northumberland to learn and apply effective and modern approaches to product and service development as well as project management. This hands-on programme takes leading techniques from fast-growing businesses and tailors them to the unique challenges and opportunities for rural creative industry. Expect accessible concepts, practical tools, and varied, well-paced workshops, all based around your business.

The programme is fully funded for cultural, creative and craft businesses and sessions will be held in Alnwick and Hexham. It requires a commitment of up to 42 hours until the end of September 2018 (including the 2 days of initial training). If you would like to be part of this initiative please register your interest, using this online form http://eepurl.com/c_DtUH

- **Session 1:** An introduction to the principles of lean startup, agile and personal resilience methodologies. Learn how these can make you more effective in identifying and realising opportunity while reducing wasted effort. All day in Alnwick on 5 February 2018 or Hexham on 6 February 2018
- **Session 2:** Putting these principles into action and using a range of tools to create an effective approach to product creation, service development and project management. All day in Alnwick on 26 February 2018 or Hexham on 27 February 2018

A number of participating businesses and registered sole traders will be offered five days of additional bespoke innovation support, designed around the needs of the individual organisations taking work patterns into account. These will be held during the spring and summer. For further information contact: Justin Souter justin.souter@souterconsulting.eu or Phil Jackman philip.w.jackman@gmail.com

(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** 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

(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) [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

(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

5) PLACEMENT SCHEMES

(NELEP, focus on DURHAM) Culture Hubs at Durham University (February to September 2018). The Culture Hubs scheme responds to the needs of the creative, arts and crafts economy by bringing help close to home. Away from urban centres, the North East's creative economy is rural and small traders can feel especially isolated. Our programmes will be run out of regional cultural 'hubs' -museums, craft centres, enterprise space, galleries etc.- drawing together like-minded practitioners and businesses for support. These fully-funded activities are designed and delivered by the Creative Fuse team based at Durham University. Durham offers two different activity strands through Culture Hubs: **Bespoke workshops and Student Placements.** Placements will be shaped around the particular needs of each creative/digital SME. Workshops will cover themes including: social media and digital presence; creativity; generating funding; and how to plan your own creative workshops. More information about venues, dates, and sign-ups will be available in January. To find out more about placements, contact Dr Alistair Brown (alistair.brown@durham.ac.uk) or Dr Ladan Cockshut (t.l.cockshut@durham.ac.uk)

(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](#)

6) 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. Please note that I am on leave from 14th December to 3rd January 2018, I will respond to you as soon as possible if you do get in touch.

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

Creative Fuse North East is supported by:

