



North East Create Growth Programme

Frequently Asked Questions





Who is eligible?

To be eligible for support under the programme, you must meet the following criteria;

- Registered as a business on Companies House
- Trading or registered within one of the following areas; **Durham, Northumberland, Gateshead, Newcastle Upon Tyne, North and South Tyneside and Sunderland**. Teesside is not included in the geographic area for this programme.
- Operating across one of the following sectors; advertising and marketing; architecture; crafts; design and designer fashion; film, TV, video, radio and photography; IT, software and computer services (including gaming); publishing; museums, galleries and libraries; music, performing and visual arts

I'm a freelancer/sole trader. can I apply?

No. This programme is designed for businesses to become investment ready, so entities are required to be legally constituted and registered with Companies House

I'm a Charity/CIC/not-for-profit. can I apply?

We know from experience that the legal structure of CICs and charities can exclude them from some types of investment. Please discuss your investment and growth ambitions with the programme team.

Are there any other eligibility criteria?

We are particularly keen to hear from companies working in the following target disciplines or sub-sectors: Design and designer fashion; Film, TV, video, radio and photography; Music, performing and visual arts.

The programme team, consulting with the diagnostic panel, will use balancing criteria to select businesses if there are more applications than available places on the programme.



What is a Creative Business?

For the purpose of this programme a Creative Business is a company registered with Companies House with creativity at its heart. DCMS's definition of creative industries includes: Advertising and marketing; Architecture; Crafts; Design and designer fashion; Film, TV, video, radio and photography; IT, software and computer services (including Gaming); Publishing; Museums, galleries and libraries; Music, performing and visual arts.

What are the balancing criteria?

Balancing criteria include: stage of business and the company's potential for 'high growth'; target sub-sector; founder/owner demographics and locations within the North East area, that are under-represented in the overall applications.

I have a North East business but my company is registered outside of the region for accounting reasons. can I still apply?

Yes. If this is the case we will require evidence of your activity in the North East area. This could be an operational base, being part of the creative ecology, or having employees situated here, or other evidence of significant activity.

When can I apply?

Applications to the programme can be made from February 2023.

When does the programme start?

The programme will commence in April 2023 with rolling admissions onto 6 cohorts until 2025.



I don't know if I am ready for the programme but I am interested in learning more?

Please fill in an Expression of Interest form and one of our team will contact you to find out more about your business ambitions. If we decide together that this programme isn't a good fit for the stage your business is currently at, we will make referrals and sign post you to other opportunities wherever possible.

We will be running a series of virtual and in person open access events where you can meet the programme team and hear more about investment opportunities and the programme. Check out our News page for live events and pre-recorded information.

What are the Innovate UK competitions?

As part of the Create Growth national programme, Innovate UK are running funding competitions, to facilitate business growth in the selected regions. Competition 1 ran from Nov 2022 – 8th February 2023. Competition 2 is in development and will be launched in Autumn 2023. Creative businesses in the Create South East region are eligible for the competitions and companies on our cohorts will be signposted to Innovate Competitions.

Is North East Create Growth Programme a grant programme?

No. However, as part of the Create Growth national programme, Innovate UK are running funding competitions, to facilitate business growth in the selected regions. Competition 1 ran Nov 2022 – Feb 2023. Competition 2 is in development and will be launched in Autumn 2023. Creative businesses in the North East region are eligible for the competitions and companies on our cohorts will be signposted to Innovate Competitions.

What's it going to cost?

North East Create Growth Programme is funded by DCMS and there are no costs for selected applicants. However, successful companies will not be reimbursed for their own time and maybe required to contribute to the costs of associated travel.



Am I guaranteed to secure an investor and how much investment will I receive?

No investment is committed or guaranteed through the programme. Applicants will have an opportunity to present their investment proposal to private investors.

What type of investors are involved?

The programme will connect you to a range of investors with experience across multiple sectors, not just creative industries. You will have the opportunity to engage with suitable investors from angels to institutional funds.

Where does the programme take place?

North East Create Growth Programme will be a hybrid program with both virtual and in-person engagements. At all times we will follow public health guidelines. In-person events will be held within the North East region

How much time would I have to commit?

North East Create Growth Programme's purpose is to support companies who are preparing for their investment journey.

As investment is a critical part of a company's growth journey, we expect cohort members to stay with the programme from start to completion. This activity will be, on average, 2 days a month over a period of 6- 9 months.

What will I get out of the programme?

Subject to your commitment throughout, by the end of the programme you will have, at minimum, an investment strategy and proposal designed to solicit growth capital. Companies will also benefit from informal discussions with appropriate investors to help shape their investment proposal.



How long will it take the team to assess my Expression of Interest?

Please allow up to 4 weeks for a member of the team to get back to you regarding a submitted Expression of Interest.

Why is this programme only available to creative businesses?

This programme is part of the national Create Growth Programme funded by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

What other support does Creative UK offer in the North East?

In addition to the Create Growth Programme, the Creative and Cultural Investment Programme is in operation in the North of Tyne. Funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority and delivered in partnership with Creative UK, the programme offers a combined package of financial and business support, including;

- Equity and Loan Finance
- Grant support
- Direct business advice
- Workshops and Events

It is open to freelancers and businesses working in the culture and creative industries in North of Tyne Combined Authority Area (North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, Newcastle City Council). The second phase of the programme is due to be launched in October 2023. Find our more [here](#) and please sign up to our [North East newsletter](#) to be kept up to date with all North East programme announcements and opportunities.



Who is involved in the Create Growth Programme?

The Create Growth Programme is funded by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and aims to support creative businesses in planning for growth and exploring and securing commercial investment opportunities. The programme is in operation across six regions across England, it launched in November 2022 and will run until March 2025. Innovate UK are involved as a national partner to support access to finance.

In the North East, the Create Growth Programme is delivered in partnership between Creative UK and the North of Tyne Combined Authority. Regional supporters of the programme also include:

