

Prosper North

3 Aug deadline to join business support programme for cultural heritage organisations in the North of England, backed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

Helping organisations recover from Covid 19 lockdown, secure investment and create impact in their communities

Applications are now open for the final edition of Creative United's business support programme, **Prosper North**.

Launched in May 2019, **Prosper North** supports **cultural heritage** organisations across the **North of England** to increase their income, improve their business planning, strengthen their impact in their communities and be ready to access social investment from Key Fund's **Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund**.

To date, the programme has helped 55 cultural heritage organisations, through the provision of **over 600 hours of bespoke 1:1 support, workshops and webinars** from specialist business advisors and partners Bates Wells, Key Fund and Social Investment Business.

For this **final round**, the programme will also directly address the challenging times faced by the sector due to **social distancing** and the **Covid 19 pandemic**, offering the organisations **help with planning for the recovery post-lock down**.

Prosper North **alumni include** *People's History Museum (Manchester), Sunderland Maritime Heritage, Homotopia (Liverpool), Greencroft Arts (Northumberland), Theatre Royal Wakefield, Huddersfield Literature Festival* and many more.

Sarah Thirtle, the Director of Business Support Programmes at Creative United said:

"In these challenging times, it is more important than ever that we provide free advice, guidance and practical skills to people who run the incredible cultural heritage organisations in the Prosper North programme. We're committed to doing all we can to equip them with the strategies and plans to bring their cherished organisations – whether they be venues with full-time teams or volunteer-led heritage sites – through the Covid 19 lock down, and towards a prosperous and impactful future."

David Renwick, Director, England, North at The National Lottery Heritage Fund said:

“We’re incredibly proud to have funded Prosper North. Through this Creative United have been able to give the invaluable heritage and cultural organisations, we all know and love, the support, advice and knowledge they need to get through this difficult time. At The National Lottery Heritage Fund we endeavour to be champions of innovation and leadership, and in the face of adversity Prosper North has been a shining example of these qualities, whose work we hope will lay the foundations for a much more resilient sector.”

Interested organisations are encouraged to join Creative United and their partners at the following online briefings taking place in June and July, to find out more about the programme, the positive change it could bring, and how to apply to be part of the final cohort.

Briefing One: 24 June 9.30am to 10.30am.

Rural culture - How to access support through digital technology.

prospernorthruralbriefing.eventbrite.co.uk

Briefing Two: 15 July 9.30am to 10.30am.

Venue based organisations – Come back from lockdown.

prospernorthvenuesbriefing.eventbrite.co.uk

Briefing Three: 22 July 9.30am to 10.30am.

Festivals and outdoor organisations – Programme planning for 2021.

prospernorthoutdoorsbriefing.eventbrite.co.uk

More information as well as links to register for the briefing events and applying for a place on the Prosper North programme can be found here

<https://www.creativeunited.org.uk/services/prospernorth/>

ENDS

Contact

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Notes to editors

Creative United

Creative United is an entrepreneurial community interest company, and Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) sector support organisation, that strives for economic growth and social impact in the arts, cultural and creative industries.

We provide a range of programmes and business services which enable the development and sustainability of organisations and enterprises operating within these sectors.

Our vision is for artists, creative enterprises and cultural organisations to have access to the specialist skills, professional advice and services they need to achieve their ambitions for growth and impact within their communities.

www.creativeunited.org.uk

Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund

The Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund (NCRF) is a new £3.1m social investment fund being delivered by Key Fund and with its partners, Creative United (CU) and the Social Investment Business (SIB). The fund capital is supplied by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Organisations eligible for the NCRF fund must be:

- an incorporated business that works in the creative and cultural sector (from games design to theatres) that delivers and can evidence social impact as a by-product of its core work.
- based/or operate substantially within one of the 11 most Northern Local Enterprise Partnership areas, which are Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Humber, Lancashire, Leeds City Region, Liverpool City Region, North East, Sheffield City Region, Tees Valley, York, North Yorkshire and East Riding.

The NCRF fund offers:

- Investments up to £150,000
- Up to 1/3rd of investment can be grant (for capital expenditure (only)
- Loans can only be used flexibly, for capital or working capital
- Working capital loans are repayable up to 5 years, interest will be usually charged at flat 4.2% (but may be raised for very short term loans) with a 2% arrangement fee
- Capital loans are repayable up to 10 years (with some flexibility to go up to 15 years), interest will usually be charged at 3.5% flat with a 2% arrangement fee
- Where possible security will be taken, but only when it could be realistically realised.

National Lottery Heritage Fund

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we Inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities, now and in the future.

www.heritagefund.org.uk

Follow @HeritageFundUK on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLotteryHeritageFund

Key Fund

Key Fund's central mission is to provide finance – flexible loans and grant/loan packages – to help community and social enterprises to start-up, become sustainable, or grow. It's not just about the money. It's also about providing the right kind of support to help our investees have the best possible chance of success.

We invest in community and social enterprises who have traditionally been excluded; turned down by mainstream banks and building societies. Particularly those in disadvantaged areas.

Key Fund believes in the power of people to find solutions to the challenges facing their communities. Our mission is to remove barriers to finance.

Our investees have one crucial thing in common – the ambition to build and strengthen local communities. <http://thekeyfund.co.uk/about/our-funders>

Bates Wells

Bates Wells believes in making a positive impact, whether that's achieving legislative and regulatory change around sustainability, or working on a landmark case with wide-ranging implications. We're not afraid to challenge the status quo. Our clients are diverse – from global household names, to public bodies, to start-ups. We're also the firm of choice for thousands of charities and social enterprises. As a values-driven firm we show commitment to our clients, our people, the environment and society. We're the first UK law firm to achieve B Corp certification.

<https://www.bateswells.co.uk>

Social Investment Business

Social Investment Business specialise in helping organisations become more resilient and sustainable so that they are in the best place to grow and increase their impact.

As one of the UK's first social investors we have provided over £400 million worth of loans and grants to hundreds of organisations all across the country.

<https://www.sibgroup.org.uk>