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PRESS RELEASE

20 OCTOBER 2014

For Graduates and Start-Ups - Free Creative Industry

Insights from the Royal Opera House

Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 October, 10am – 4pm

The Royal Opera House's Culture Change programme for business sustainability is running a **free** event to help small businesses in the creative industries. **Making It: Creative Industry Insights for Graduates and Start-Ups** takes place at South Essex College in Southend-on-Sea on Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 October from 10am until 4pm.

Making It: Creative Industry Insights for Graduates and Start-Ups offers two days of free, practical workshops, designed to provide the inspiration and resources to start up your own creative business. Transform your creative talent into a viable business opportunity and develop the tools needed to run a successful company or freelance career. Learn how to network, promote your work and embed sustainability into your business from the very beginning. The sessions last from 10am until 4pm on both days and will be held at South Essex College in Luker Road, Southend-on-Sea.

Beneficiaries who achieve 12 hours of business support will receive a certificate in formal recognition of their participation in the Culture Change programme. They will also come away with two free tickets to an exclusive ballet rehearsal at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. To register for the event, please go to <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/culture-change-5850276263>

The event is **free** to attend but registration is required.

The Culture Change programme is aimed at freelancers, small and medium enterprises and microbusinesses (fewer than 250 employees and an annual turnover of less than €50 million) in the creative and cultural industries across the East of England. Events have been running across the region since February 2014. During this time, Culture Change has engaged more than 140 individuals and businesses in free workshops,

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networking events and practical sessions helping them future-proof their work, cut their bills and reduce their environmental footprint.

Participants in the Culture Change programme receive a **minimum of 12 hours free support**, including developing a sustainability strategy, led by industry experts, Julie's Bicycle. The programme also offers practical workshops about sustainable recruitment, digital marketing and access to finance. Bespoke support and action planning, together with the creation of a peer-to-peer business support network, are all features of the programme.

The Royal Opera House is partnered in the Culture Change programme by Creative & Cultural Skills, High House Production Park, Julie's Bicycle and Thurrock Council.

For further information on Culture Change visit www.roh.org.uk/culturechange

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Notes for Editors

The Culture Change Programme is supported by the East of England ERDF Programme 2007 to 2013. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the managing authority for the European Regional Development Fund Programme, which is one of the funds established by the European Commission to help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support local businesses and create jobs. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/browse/business/funding-debt/european-regional-development-funding>

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