



THE **TECH** FESTIVAL FOR THE **NORTH EAST**

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS

TechNExt26 will take place from Monday 15 June to Friday 19 June 2026, featuring a programme of flagship events, themed festival hubs, and a fringe programme running across the North East.

This document outlines how organisations can apply to host sessions or events as part of the festival.

HUBS

Each festival hub focuses on a specific theme and offers concentrated programming at key locations:

- Tuesday 16 June: Tech for Good Hub – North Tyneside
- Wednesday 17 June: Tech Startup Hub – Durham
- Thursday 18 June: Data and AI Hub – Newcastle
- Friday 19 June: Creative Tech Hub – Sunderland

Organisations are encouraged to propose sessions that align with one of the festival hubs. Sessions should typically last 30 - 90 mins and may take the form of a keynote, panel discussion, or interactive workshop. There is no funding offered to those holding a session within a hub, as the festival covers all venue costs.

Participating in a hub offers significant benefits, including enhanced visibility, access to a targeted audience, and the opportunity to contribute to the festival's overall impact. The festival team will manage all bookings for hub sessions and provide you with a login to check on attendee numbers. Applications for a hub session does not guarantee inclusion in the programme.

FRINGE EVENTS

For sessions that don't fit within any of the hub themes or require specific, onsite locations, organisations can apply to host a fringe event. As a fringe event organiser, you will be responsible for organising the venue, take bookings and communicate with all speakers and attendees yourselves. While fringe events remain a valued part of TechNExt, hub participation offers a more integrated experience for attendees and ensures greater visibility. Application for a fringe event does not necessarily guarantee inclusion in the programme as we have limited places available. There will be limited funding available for fringe event organisers to help with venue and and/or catering costs.



Submitting an Application

You can submit an application by visiting the “get involved” section of our website. By applying for a hub session or fringe event, your organisation will:

- Be included in the official festival programme and website
- Have access to TechNExt branding assets to promote your event
- Be eligible to apply for limited funding to support event costs (fringe events only).

Tips for applicants:

- Hub sessions should clearly align with the chosen theme.
- Fringe events should explain why the session requires a separate setting or falls outside hub themes.

Deadline: Close of business, Friday 27 March 2026

Please note: Submission does not guarantee acceptance. All proposals are reviewed for alignment and scheduling.

Event bookings

If your session or fringe event is accepted, you will receive a draft event listing for review before publication. TechNExt will actively promote your event via the festival website and marketing channels, but you are encouraged to use your own networks to maximise audience reach.

The ‘Good Festival’ ambition ([Read more here](#))

By signing up to be part of the festival, you commit to supporting our ambition to ensure the festival is as accessible, sustainable and diverse as possible.

Accessibility

Wherever possible, venues and events will be accessible to anyone who would like to attend. We'll consider access to venues via public transport, accessible facilities within venues, provision of disabled parking facilities and equipment for people with hearing impairments.

Sustainability

TechNExt Festival champions sustainability and aims to ensure all events adopt sustainable practices to minimise environmental impact. Please avoid single use plastic, consider using local suppliers wherever possible, avoiding unnecessary printing/paper/handouts, and encouraging the use of public transport by delegates. You will be sent a ‘sustainability code of conduct’ document once your event is confirmed to help you with your planning.

Diversity

We strive for diversity throughout the festival and ask that your event reflects the diverse nature of the tech sector and the wider society we live in. Please consider your panels and speakers in light of this, with contributors of varying genders, races, ethnicities, ages and seniority level.



Review stage

Once your proposed session or event has been submitted, it will be reviewed by the TechNExt team to ensure it aligns with the festival's themes and can be scheduled effectively. The team will check that all required information has been provided, and following this review, your submission will either be confirmed, with a draft listing sent to you for review, or you will be informed that it has not been successful for inclusion in the programme.

Funding

Limited funding is available to support a small number of fringe events, covering costs such as venue hire, catering, and speakers, with priority given to charity and community groups.

Funding is assessed in rounds until fully allocated, and any awards are paid after the event once the required impact data (including attendee numbers, postcodes, and modes of transport) has been provided. The TechNExt team may also request clarification on costs before confirming any funding.

For any questions, please contact the TechNExt team: getinvolved@technext.co.uk

TechNExt is underwritten by Dynamo North East CIC, which is co-organised by Sunderland Software City. The festival is a collaborative festival, working with partners across the North East and delivered by BeaconHouse Events.

Kindly supported by our headline sponsors Accenture, Leighton and Sage.

www.technext.co.uk

Getinvolved@technext.co.uk

