

Innovate UK

Technology Strategy Board

Competition for funding

Virtual and augmented reality

DEADLINE

**18 August
2015**

YES

NO

NO

NO

NO

IC tomorrow



Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are exciting technologies at an early stage of development. We are looking to provide support to businesses that want to apply these technologies in new and untested areas.

Innovate UK is offering up to six businesses a maximum of £35,000 each to encourage innovation around VR/AR across the themes of music, retail, healthcare, education, construction and tactile technology.

The contest

The recent re-emergence of VR and AR has caused enormous excitement across a wide range of sectors. The application of such technologies – not just for entertainment or information-sharing, but also in more technical and industrial contexts – offers users entirely new ways of perceiving and interacting with the digital world.

Through our IC tomorrow programme, we are looking for proposals from companies with innovative digital ideas relevant to developing these immersive technologies.

The companies will not only benefit from funding, but also the opportunity to collaborate with commercial partners to accelerate development of their technologies.

We want to see solutions with potential appeal to a wide commercial market. Successful applicants will be expected to trial their proposed solutions with their industry partners for at least three months.

The challenges

We are looking for innovative solutions to address one of our six contest challenges within the themes of music, retail, healthcare, education, construction and tactile technology.

Apply now to:

- trial your technology with major industry players while keeping your intellectual property
- secure up to £35,000 to develop your solution
- receive promotion, support and advice to speed up the commercialisation of your solution.

Deadline

Noon on 18 August 2015

Briefing events

13 July 2015, 2–6pm, Ambassadors
Bloomsbury Hotel, 12 Upper Woburn
Place, London WC1H 0HX

15 July 2015, 2–6pm, The Landing,
Blue Tower, Media City UK,
Manchester M50 2ST

Awards

Six awards of up to £35,000

Full details

<http://bit.ly/VARcon>

CHALLENGE ONE

Smart construction

Partner: Crossrail

Crossrail and its partners are pioneering the use of AR and building information modelling to support the visualisation of project delivery. Crossrail's tier one suppliers are already required to produce 3D building information models, meaning that the company is well equipped to support AR and VR applications. A key challenge in the testing, commissioning and handover phases of the Crossrail project is to maintain safety and quality while delivering a world-class railway. This challenge seeks innovative solutions that use available data to support one or more of these delivery phases.

CHALLENGE TWO

Immersive retail

Partner: John Lewis

Across retail, customers want information about the products they buy and ideas about how to use them. This is particularly true of more expensive and larger items. VR can help customers decide which products are best for them through letting them visualise objects and view them in different spaces. The solution for this challenge should harness VR/AR to bridge the gap between the in-store and online experience.

CHALLENGE THREE

Enhanced medical training and care

Partners: Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), Enteric HTC and Royal London Hospital

This challenge is to create an AR/VR solution for use in medical training, or to provide patients with more information about their treatment, using AR/VR to create immersive and interactive reproductions of the body, live surgery or other medical situations. Examples include training medical students using simulations, training staff in a virtual operating theatre, or helping patients visualise the effects of their treatment. The winning applicant will trial their technology at the Royal London Hospital.

CHALLENGE FOUR

Next-generation vocational education

Partner: Pearson plc

Vocational education is one of the fastest growing and most valuable global education markets. New technology applications in this area, such as VR, AR and immersive 360° video, offer exciting opportunities to develop fresh processes and teaching methods. This challenge is to create VR/AR tools, services or interactive immersive environments to deliver vocational training and learning. Businesses should consider how their innovations could deepen learning, and how they could be scaled up and taken to market. Successful applicants will trial their solution in partnership with Pearson plc.

CHALLENGE FIVE

Tactile experiences

Partners: King's College London, Konica Minolta and Ericsson

King's College London, in partnership with Konica Minolta and Ericsson, is pioneering research into the tactile internet. It wishes to develop a tactile transmission perceived in real time, which will enable a doctor to measure the softness of parts of the human body remotely. This challenge seeks solutions that enable tactile or haptic experiences to take place within a virtual environment.

CHALLENGE SIX

Amplified music experiences

Partner: Columbia Records

VR and AR can allow consumers to connect with music products in potentially transformative ways, enabling fans to access engaging experiential environments. This challenge seeks proposals for innovative tools, processes, products or services that enable music fans to share immersive experiences with artists and their content. Successful applicants will have access to content from Columbia's roster of international artists.



Who can apply?

To apply for a £35,000 award you must:

- be a company, based in the UK or EU
- propose a solution which responds to one of the challenges
- propose a solution that is creatively, technically or commercially innovative
- propose a solution that has wider market potential beyond the challenge partnership
- have a clear idea of the revenue-earning potential and target market of your proposed solution.

You don't need to have an existing app or service, or be currently active in the VR/AR industry.

You do need to have a specific product, platform or service in mind, even if it is only at the idea stage.

Responding to the challenge

Although you can submit multiple entries across different challenges in this contest, **we can fund only one solution from each company.** Applicants should carefully consider which challenge is best suited to their solution.

For further information on the challenges and criteria please see the full guidance document at: <http://bit.ly/VRARGfA>

Apply through our **_connect** platform: <http://bit.ly/VARcon>

Deadline for submissions: noon on **18 August 2015**

How does the contest work?

The contest is a two-stage procurement process. Stage one involves filling in an application form and making a two-minute video presentation of your idea.

We will select up to 18 entries to go through to the next stage. Stage two involves a live pitch and Q&A to a panel of judges who will make the final decision on which solutions to fund.

Stage 1

Applicants can apply from **Monday 6 July 2015**. There are two briefing events for potential applicants to find out more information, on Monday 13 July in London and on Wednesday 15 July in Manchester. The first of these will be recorded and made available as a webinar to applicants at <http://bit.ly/VARcon>

- To learn more about the contest and to get the application form, go to the web page for this competition at: <http://bit.ly/VARcon>
- Download and read the *Guidance for Applicants* as it includes full challenge descriptions and the information you will need to complete your application.
- Attend a briefing event or watch the webinar to find out about the challenges directly from the challenge partners. Events are on 13 July 2015 in London and 15 July 2015 in Manchester.
- Complete the online application form. You can save a partially completed application, update, finalise and submit the form at your convenience.

- As part of your application, upload a two-minute video. Note that we judge the video on the strength of your idea – not the production quality.

Remember to submit your completed application form before **noon on Tuesday 18 August 2015**.

Videos and written applications will remain confidential but they will be seen by a panel of expert assessors who will review the ideas described in them and select a shortlist based upon how well they address the above criteria. From that shortlist an internal panel will then choose up to 18 finalists to go through to stage two.

What sort of video are we looking for?

Video entries by previously successful contest applicants have included a mix of pitching to camera, animations and example footage of the proposed solution. They also clearly highlighted how their idea meets the challenge in the contest. We do not expect you to share any intellectual property or commercially sensitive information.

Stage 2

Stage two will involve a panel session held on **Wednesday 7 October 2015**.

Finalists will have 10 minutes to present their ideas and take part in a Q&A session with the contest panel, which will include sector experts and the challenge partners. The panel will select up to six winning companies.

Apply now

At: <http://bit.ly/VARcon>

IMPORTANT: do not leave your submission until the last minute. Technical problems do occur and late submissions will not be accepted.



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What is IC tomorrow?

IC tomorrow is an Innovate UK programme to accelerate innovation in the digital sector by connecting high-potential start-ups and SMEs with commercial partners, through funded contests and strategic matchmaking activities.

Need help?

If you need help applying, contact the IC tomorrow team.

Helpline: 0300 321 4357

Email: support@innovateuk.gov.uk

Help for SMEs to grow faster

Small businesses that combine the funding they receive from us with additional business support are more likely to grow faster. If you are an SME and receive funding through this competition, you will automatically gain access to a growth workshop, an online diagnostic and a growth expert to help you develop a growth plan. This may include coaching, mentoring and entrepreneurial skills training.

Publicity

As part of the application process all applicants are asked to submit a public description of the project. This should adequately describe the project but not disclose any information that may impact on intellectual property, is confidential or commercially sensitive. The titles of successful projects, names of organisations, amounts awarded and the public description will be published once the decision to offer an award has been communicated to applicants by email. Information about unsuccessful project applications will remain confidential and will not be made public.

Email pressoffice@innovateuk.gov.uk with any queries.

Key dates

Contest opens	Monday 6 July 2015
Briefing event	Monday 13 July 2015 – London Wednesday 15 July 2015 – Manchester
Submission deadline	Noon Tuesday 18 August 2015
Finalists notified	Friday 18 September 2015
Practice pitch sessions at IC tomorrow office	Tuesday 22 September 2015 – for all finalists Monday 28 September 2015 – one-to-one sessions Tuesday 29 September 2015 – one-to-one sessions
Final panel session	Wednesday 7 October 2015
Winners announced	Friday 16 October 2015
Trials launched	Summer 2016

Looking for
partners to work
on your project?
Go to [_connect](http://connect.innovateuk.org)

**connect.
innovateuk.org**

Competition helpline

0300 321 4357

Email

**support@
innovateuk.
gov.uk**

Innovate UK is the new name for the Technology Strategy Board – the UK's innovation agency. We know that taking a new idea to market is a challenge. We fund, support and connect innovative businesses through a unique mix of people and programmes to accelerate sustainable economic growth.

The Technology Strategy Board is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and is incorporated by Royal Charter in England and Wales with company number RC000818. Registered office: North Star House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1UE.

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