

NORTH EAST ENGLAND WORKS.

The North East has one of the most creative and exciting immersive technology clusters outside of London. It is a leading location for world-class facilities, specific support networks and unique opportunities for applications of immersive technologies in manufacturing, automotive and life sciences.


The region is home to some of the world's most internationally renowned global players in immersive technology including ZeroLight, Coatsink, Luminous Group, Dimension, Neutron VR, and Radical Panda.



Why immersive technology companies choose to locate in North East England

- Access to a large talent pool of developers
- High quality office accommodation, collaborative innovation hubs and studio space for all sizes of companies
- Access to an outstanding portfolio of physical space and innovative kit for immersive technology companies
- The region has world-leading capabilities in digital technology, video games, visual effects and animation
- Specialist university courses designed for the immersive tech sector
- Unrivalled access to business networks and cluster groups primed to offer guidance and advice across a range of topics.

nearly
6,000
computer
sciences
university
students



The highest proportion of any English region

Access to markets utilising immersive technology

North East England contains a cluster of international firms from the digital and advanced manufacturing sectors.

The region has significant early immersive technology adopter sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, subsea, offshore, and automotive, that are integrating innovative virtual reality, augmented reality and robotic technologies into their operations in the North East.

As a testbed location, companies located here can work with a nationally significant and collaborative advanced manufacturing base to develop immersive technology products.



AkzoNobel

AkzoNobel is a Dutch manufacturing company holding a £14.2 billion turnover and working in 80 countries across the globe. From its North East base, AkzoNobel chose to work with the Innovation Team at Digital Catapult NETV, who provided horizon scanning services. As a result of this project AkzoNobel went on to work with 3 SMEs to produce proof of concepts in partnership with their teams, including one hologram project.

Komatsu

Komatsu is a Japanese manufacturing company employing more than 400 workers in the North East and specialising in hydraulic tracked excavators. The company has implemented a worksite simulator into its training and, with the help of local tech companies, has created a realistic virtual training environment for their employees.

Dyer Engineering

Dyer Engineering is a group of fabrication and machining businesses with a wide range of capabilities to manufacture metal components and structures. Dyer has been serving sectors including rail, automotive, defence and oil and gas from its site in County Durham. Dyer participated in the Digital Catapult NETV's digital manufacturing programme pilot in 2018 and has recently developed a proof of concept for a VR factory tour provided by a local tech start-up.

Unbeatable skills availability

There are over 32,000 people employed in the region's digital sector and the region has a well-established market of loyal, skilled employees.

The North East digital workforce is loyal, with companies reporting fewer staff shortages than in other parts of the UK. This, linked to a high percentage of graduates staying in the region after their studies, ensures companies locating here can appoint the right talent from junior level to senior management.

Five universities in North East England ensure the region is a hot bed for talent and skills, with each university offering innovative and specialist courses aimed at the immersive technology sector. Programmes such as Sunderland University's Digital Incubator also support the skills pipeline by connecting students and graduates with local studios to work on live projects and research and development.

Our further education facilities are equally focused on developing the next generation of tech pioneers. For example, Gateshead College's Level 3 Emerging Technologies course provides students with access to PROTO's specialist kit, such as motion capture and 3D character capture, to work on live projects and connects games students for immersive games jams.



Assets and facilities

Tech companies moving to the North East can enjoy access to an outstanding portfolio of physical space and technical support for new and growing businesses. These facilities offer office accommodation, innovative hubs and a wide range of specialist business support.

Key facilities ready to support immersive technology businesses include:

- **PROTO** in Gateshead is Europe's first dedicated centre for emerging technologies. Its world-class facilities include a motion capture studio, sound stage for digital content creation and a photogrammetry rig to create 3D models. Local tech companies get cost-effective access to kit, studio space and expertise to create and test new immersive experiences
- **North East Tees Valley Immersive Lab** gives businesses the chance to experience immersive technology – such as augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality – first-hand to improve the impact and efficiency of the technology and to educate them on the value of adopting immersive technologies. Academic and research institutions also work with the lab to advise industry on opportunities for market growth
- **Immersive Incubation Hub** supports start-up games and immersive technology companies. It provides funding to access specialists, community and in-house consultants and connect businesses to leading companies such as Apple, Epic, Steam and publishers, as well as providing desk and office space
- **TusPark**, located close to Newcastle Central station, is a city centre incubator with connections nationally and internationally that offers its members access to office space, workshops and a network of fledging entrepreneurs



Unrivalled business networks

The North East's tech sector is one of the most supportive business networks in the UK. Businesses locating here can access an array of specialist networks that provide advice, support and opportunities for collaboration in digital and tech.

- **VRTGO LABS** - VRTGO Labs is the UK's first industry-led VR and AR centre of excellence that brings together the best VR and AR companies, academia and freelancers to collaborate on the development and commercial application of these emerging technologies.
- **Digital Catapult North East Tees Valley (NETV)** supports businesses from across the region to explore the growth and adoption of advanced digital technologies to improve the productivity and performance of organisations.
- **Dynamo** - Dynamo is a volunteer led group set up with the core mission to 'Grow the North East IT Economy' through collaboration, innovation and skills.
- **Digital Union** - The largest network of Digital businesses across the North East. Their aim is to represent the sector and provide flexible and adaptable business support that can be accessed by Digital Union members at all stages in their business cycle
- **Innovation SuperNetwork** brings together more than 50 partners and over 5,000 businesses to share new ideas, market opportunities, knowledge and funding to support innovative businesses in the North East.

Connectivity

North East England provides direct access to locations worldwide, with flights to major cities and European hubs via Newcastle International Airport. To the south of the region is Teesside Airport which offers additional flights to the UK and Europe.

The three major train stations in the region, Durham, Newcastle and Sunderland. All offer fast and frequent rail links to London (2 hours 45 mins), Birmingham (3 hours), Manchester (2 hours 30 mins) and Edinburgh (1 hour 30 mins).

The Tyne and Wear conurbation benefits from a light rail system with over 60 stations and some of the least congested roads, with an average commute to work of less than 30 minutes.

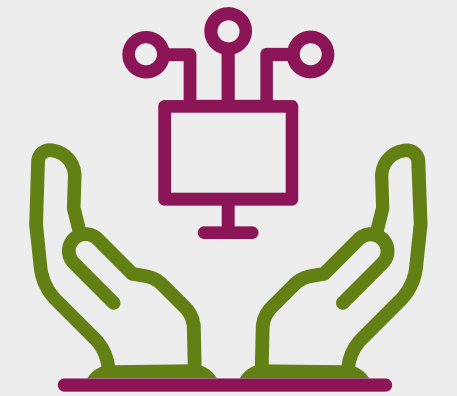
The region also has excellent digital infrastructure including Stellium data centre and the fastest broadband speed in England.



The North East has the fastest average broadband connection speed in England

over

10



specialist support clusters for the digital sector

“Opening an office in the North East of England ensures that we can continue to work closely with our UK customers, it enables us to attract talent in the UK's only immersive technology cluster and to continue our growth in providing data driven VR simulation to organisations whose activities are Risky, Remote or Rare.”

Co-founder of VRAI, Pat O'Connor.



IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES LOCATED IN NORTH EAST ENGLAND

Zerolight

Dimension

Radical Panda

Neutron VR

Hammerhead VR

Hedgehog Lab

Coatsink

Pocket Money Games

Sumo Digital

VRAI



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