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.

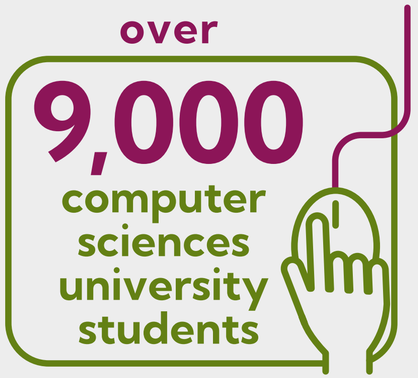
The region is home to some of the world's most internationally renowned global players in immersive technology including ZeroLight, Coatsink, Dimension, Fuzzy Logic Studio and VRAI.

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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.



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 32,720 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. This includes Super Computing at Durham University, Northumbria University's BIM Academy, the Faculty of Computer Science at the University of Sunderland, and Newcastle University's Centre for Doctoral Training in Cloud Computing for Big Data and Digital Institute.

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.
- **The Advanced Media Production** network is the UK's first 5G-enabled media production facility, connecting studios in PROTO, Gateshead and Dock Street, London with Digital Catapult HQ. The network supports research and innovation in media production. Its mission is to expand creative potential through new technologies and workflows, strengthen the UK's position in content creation, boost regional development, and foster industry-leading skills and tools for storytelling and visual communication.
- **5G 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.



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.

- **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 North East** – Dynamo is a membership group set up with the core mission to 'Grow the North East IT Economy' through collaboration, innovation and skills.



The North East has one of the fastest average broadband connection speeds in England

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.

"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.

over 8



specialist support clusters for the digital sector



"Our office in the North East of England has provided the foundation to develop cutting-edge immersive solutions that bridge the future skills gaps and accelerate the UK's drive to become a world leader in electrification.

Since opening our offices, we have benefited from becoming part of the region's thriving tech community, building strong relationships with role-players, including Dynamo North East and Sunderland Software City. Newcastle is well connected to the rest of the UK and the world, which ensures it is an effective springboard for Fuzzy Logic to take its product offering to clients both nationally and globally. The region's top universities also provide access to a pipeline of quality talent right on our doorstep, which will be integral to our growth process as a business moving forward."

Harvey Trent, Director of Fuzzy Logic Studio







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