

# Northern Ireland Electricity Networks VR Application Development

**Knowledge Pack for Applicants**

**Nov  
2021**

# Introduction

This pack provides further information and submission details regarding the Open Call: Northern Ireland Electricity Networks VR Application Development

NIE Networks have identified Digital Catapult Northern Ireland as a lead partner to support the organisation in securing an immersive technology provider to enable them to develop a virtual reality application that will support in showcasing NIE Networks key business functions and demonstrate the use of VR for training purposes.

Digital Catapult is a technology innovation centre that unlocks digital growth in the UK economy with the aim of unlocking NI potential through collaboration, inspiration and technology. DCNI works with companies of all sizes to transform their businesses by accelerating the practical application of digital innovation. The Catapult bridges the gap between research and industry, finding the right technologies to solve problems, increase productivity and open-up new markets faster.





## Background

Northern Ireland Electricity Networks ( NIE Networks ) owns the electricity transmission and distribution network and operates the electricity distribution network which transports electricity to over 860,000 customers. They employ over 1200 people and are looking ways to ensure that people with new skills and abilities are attracted to work for the company. NIE Networks have previously developed an existing VR application (a 360 degree video experience ) as an application for outreach events, this acts as a taster for what potential new recruits to the company can expect to experience within the field.


This project will focus on address the company's need to use Immersive Technologies (XR) to address their current business challenges.



# The Challenge

NIE Networks have identified the need to attract new entrants into the profession. Competition for the best new talent is increasing from a variety of other professions with attractive potential career avenues, the company need to present the profession as relevant, challenging and technologically savvy. Through engagement events, young people are making early judgements about what NIE Networks can provide them as a potential employer with a variety of career options. Overall NIE Networks are looking to present a dynamic public image/perception of their organisation and help people better understand the scope of what the company does and the impact that it makes within the region. NIE Networks aim to use immersive technology to also influence the influencers when promoting career choices for young people in a relatively small region from which to recruit.

NIE Networks are concerned that potential employees may not be choosing the company due to lack of public visibility of the type and diversity of roles available (you can't be what you can't see) and no access to some of the working environments due to safety risks



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# Challenge outcomes

The following are indicative outcomes for this challenge. We are interested in your creative solutions and ideas to address the challenge.

## OVERVIEW:

- Develop a Virtual Reality application for NIE Networks to be able to use internally and externally (promotional events) to promote the diverse, technical and innovative nature of the company. This will express what the company offers and its range of job roles for potential employees, particularly apprentices and electrical engineers.
- This is currently imagined as an interactive experience to engage young people who may be interested in working with NIE Networks to give them a feel for the company, the job roles, its culture and connects with their passions/concerns (Green energy/environmentalism). This 'Built in' interactivity may allow the viewer/user an opportunity to sample how VR is/will be used across business functions e.g. training, data visualisation, maintenance, etc
- This project should also consider how a VR Home environment where users will have a better understanding of NIE Networks, the opportunities offered by the company and the type of job roles involved.

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# Assessment Criteria

.Applications will be assessed on following criteria

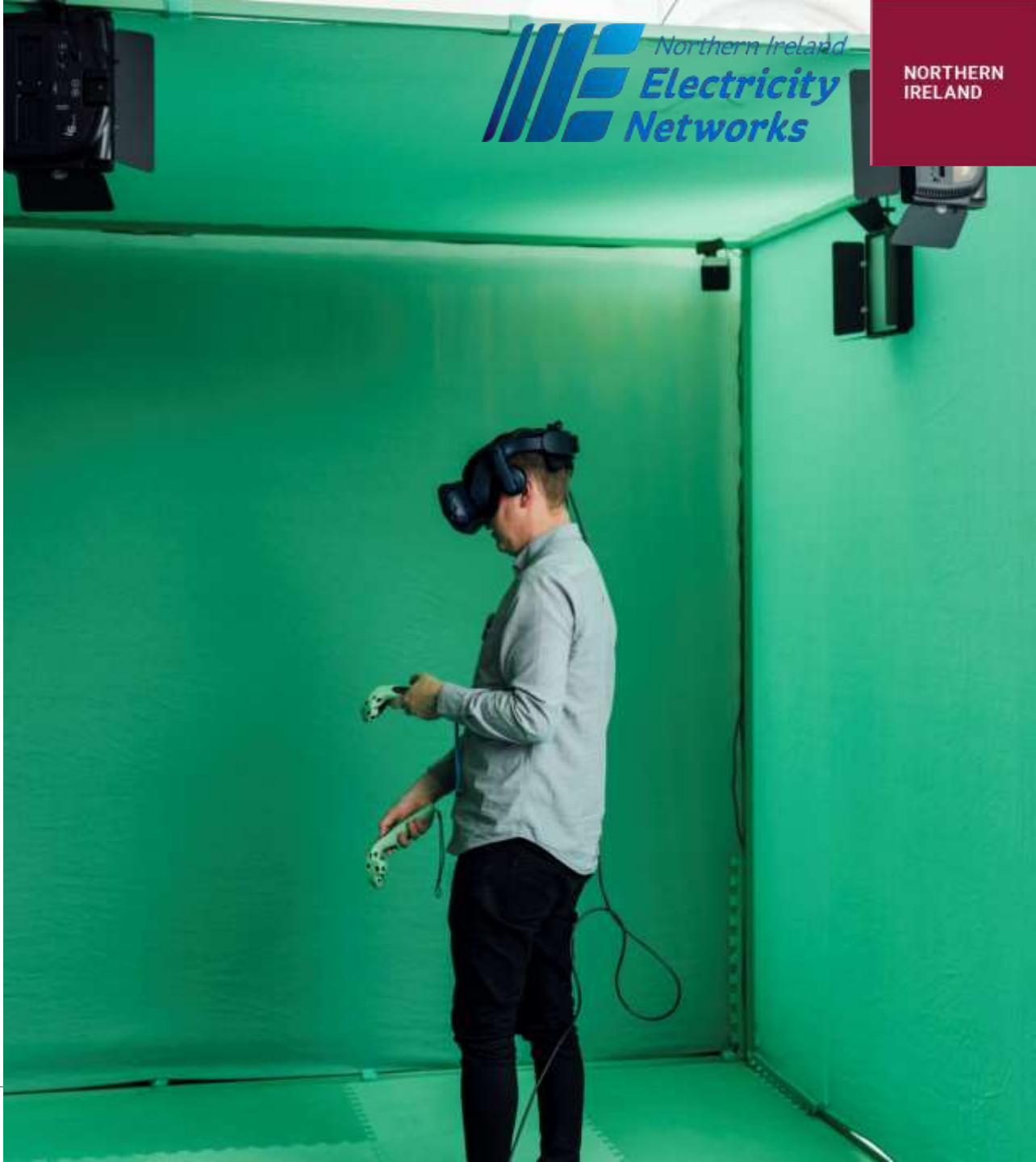
- Understanding of and response to the Open Call
- Expertise in the areas being addressed
- Expertise in the appropriate technology areas
- Ability to meet NIE Networks onsite-in Northern Ireland (COVID permitting)

At the pitch event, pitches will be assessed against the following criteria

- Value for money
- Improves engagement with potential trainees and employees
- Demonstrates innovation in training apprentices and trainees
- Technically feasible and scalable

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# How to Apply



[www.digitalcatapult.org.uk](http://www.digitalcatapult.org.uk)

**1**

Register your interest by filling in the online form on the Open Call webpage on the Digital Catapult website

**2**

Receive an email confirming your registration & application information. Applications will close at 17:00 on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> Jan.

**3**

Your application will be assessed and you will be notified if you are being considered for shortlisting

**4**

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to pitch at DCNI offices, Ormeau Baths, Belfast/Online 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 22

**5**

The winning applicant(s) will be notified by email by 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 22

**6**

Procurement and contract with NIE Networks expected to start as soon as possible after notification.

**7**

Product development - VR application delivered by May 2022

# Submission Details

.Please submit a response with the following details

## Contact Details

- Company name, Contact details & team lead
- Confirm your ability to meet onsite at NIE Networks Company HQ (Northern Ireland, UK) (COVIDI Restrictions Permitting)

## Challenge response

- Please describe and outline your understanding of the challenge and your approach to tackling this project (max 1000 words)

## Experience & technical

- Please describe your expertise in the appropriate technology area showing relevant examples regarding your experience in XR to this challenge. Please provide links or additional material to showcase any relevant experience (max1000 words)
- Please list any existing XR platform or bespoke platforms you may consider working in to help deliver this project and your team's experience in using them (max 1000 words)

## Budget

- Describe and outline the costs of the proposed solution to this challenge. The indicative budget for this challenge is £20k. Consideration may be given to submissions above this budget that demonstrate innovation, a strong rationale, and describes what XR content experience will be delivered over and above the original indicative budget. (max 1000 words)

## Submission Date:

- 17:00 on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> Jan

Please submit completed submissions to: [adam.wallace@digicatapultni.org.uk](mailto:adam.wallace@digicatapultni.org.uk)

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The background of the slide is a photograph of a large stadium at night. The stadium is filled with thousands of bright, warm-white lights that create a dense, starry effect across the entire scene. The lights are arranged in a way that suggests a large-scale event or celebration.

For more information contact:  
Adam Wallace – Innovation Services  
[adam.wallace@digicatapultni.org.uk](mailto:adam.wallace@digicatapultni.org.uk)

A pink 3D rectangular box with a slight shadow, containing contact information.

[digicatapult.org.uk](http://digicatapult.org.uk)