

Athlone Gets Slice Of Pan-European Third Level Metaverse Project



A €9m project to build [Metaverse](#) tools for the media and arts sector will get underway at the [Technological University of Shannon \(TUS\)](#) in Athlone this October.

Funded by the EU's Horizon Europe programme for research and innovation, TRANSMIXR will bring together researchers, design partners and media companies from 19 countries with a blend of theoretical and applied AI and extended reality (augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR)) research and development expertise.

Participants in the programme share a goal of creating "human-centric tools" for remote content production and consumption, including a platform that will act as a distributed XR environment for remote collaboration, and an XR media experience environment for the delivery and consumption of immersive media experiences.

Dr Niall Murray, project co-ordinator and SFI Adapt Centre investigator, said TRANSMIXR will "ignite the immersive media sector by enabling new narrative visions".

"TRANSMIXR is a very exciting project that will create a suite of user-centric technologies to support the creation, consumption and understanding of new media experiences in distributed, collaborative and immersive ways.

"Underpinned by the convergence of AI and XR, the design of these new systems will be informed by and be evaluated with real end users," Dr Murray explained.

"A key strength of the TRANSMIXR consortium is its interdisciplinary nature, bringing complementary technical, methodological and domain expertise together to create impactful solutions for the creative and culture sectors."

Dr Conor Keighrey, an immersive technology researcher at TUS's Athlone campus, said: "In addition to our role as coordinator, TUS will further develop our research on extended reality for the TRANSMIXR distributed creation environments as well as working on the creation of human centric AI for XR audience understanding."



The announcement comes at a "unique window of opportunity" for the European creative cultural sector to innovate around digital co-creation, interaction and engagement with the growing maturity of XR and AI .

TUS said the project will utilise ground-breaking AI techniques for the understanding and processing of complex media content that will enable the reuse of heterogeneous assets across immersive content delivery platforms.

Using the Living Labs methodology, TRANSMIXR will develop and evaluate four pilots that bring the vision of future media experiences to life in four important creative and cultural sector domains: news media, broadcasting, performing arts, and cultural heritage.

The consortium brings together several universities and research centres, notably TUS and Trinity College Dublin as well as Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica (Netherlands), Modul Technology GmbH (Austria), Ethniko Kentro Erevnas Kai Technologikis Anaptixis (CERTH, Greece)m, and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (Switzerland).

Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium) will lead the efforts with respect to user-centred design, and industry partners Intel Germany GmbH (Germany), VRAI (Ireland), Khora APS (Denmark), Immersion (France) and weBlyzard technology (Austria) bringing further technical expertise.

Media practitioners from the different TRANSMIX creative and cultural sector domains will be tasked with ensuring the developed technologies are grounded on real industry needs.

The partners include Agence France-Presse and Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision.

The TRANSMIXR project, which is expected to run for three years, will hold its kick-off meeting from 25-26 October in Athlone.

Photo: Dr Niall Murray and Dr Conor Keighrey showcase a Metaverse type simulated environment where VR users can meet, interact, and participate in shared activities using social VR. (Pic: Nathan Cafolla)

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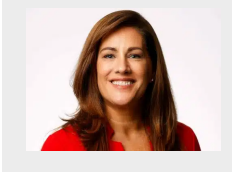
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