

News story: UK takes centre stage in immersive entertainment revolution

A total of £18 million government and industry funding has been awarded to projects developing the next generation of immersive experiences. Using virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality, the projects will create cutting-edge immersive experiences which will be tested at scale on real audiences.

The projects are part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund's audience of the future programme, delivered through UK Research and Innovation. Through this programme, government is helping the most talented storytellers across the UK create engaging immersive experiences.

Immersive sports, performance and visitor experiences

The demonstrator projects will develop immersive experiences in 3 areas; sports entertainment, performance, and visitor experience.

Performance

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) will lead a consortium of 15 specialist organisations from the theatre, music, video production, gaming and research industries to create a live performance unbound by location. Audiences will use mobile phones, extended reality headsets and live streams to experience live performance like never before.

Visitor experience

Factory 42's consortium will create 2 multi-sensory, interactive worlds in London's Natural History Museum and Science Museum. At the Science Museum, visitors will take part in a mixed-reality detective experience featuring high-resolution 3D scans of robots. The Natural History Museum will bring dinosaurs to life through the story of a palaeontologist's discoveries. Shorter versions of both experiences will tour shopping centres across the UK.

Sport entertainment

Esports – video games played competitively in front of a live audience – has the fastest growing audience for live sports globally. This project will create new esports platform called WEAVR that uses gameplay data to transform how remote audiences experience first esports, and further down the line physical sports.

WEAVR will be developed by a consortium that includes ESL, the largest esports content producer in the world, as well as academics and innovators

across immersive technologies, data-driven content production and broadcast.

Leading digital and creative talent

Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries Margot James said:

The UK is home to some of the world's leading digital and creative talent. Through our modern Industrial Strategy and multi-million-pound creative industries sector deal, we are bringing them together to give audiences a truly unique experience.

The growth of immersive technology has the power to transform the way in which we watch theatre, play games or go to the cinema, and these new projects will demonstrate how we can take people closer than ever before to the live action.

A new era of entertainment

Science and Innovation Minister Chris Skidmore said:

We are now in a new era of how we consume entertainment, and these projects announced today could see us walking with dinosaurs and experiencing being in the stands of major football matches from our own living rooms.

We have an impressive reputation of producing outstanding sport, cultural institutions and visual entertainment. That is why, through our modern industrial Strategy, we are building on these strengths to make the areas even more accessible and enjoyable to people, whilst supporting high-skilled jobs across the UK.

Changing cultural experiences

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive, Professor Sir Mark Walport, said:

New technologies being pioneered in the UK, such as virtual and augmented reality, are fundamentally changing the way we participate in cultural experiences, from watching dramatic performances and visiting museums to playing video games.

Through investments such as the projects announced today, the government and UK Research and Innovation will support the creative industries to innovate in exciting ways that will deliver new experiences for audiences of the future with accompanying economic benefits.

Global opportunity for the UK

Professor Andrew Chitty, UKRI's Challenge Director for Audience of the Future said:

The market for immersive content is a global opportunity. The presence of international partners in these ground-breaking projects is a massive vote of confidence not only in UK research and innovation but in our creative companies who will ensure that the UK becomes a world-leading destination for immersive content production bringing the new jobs and investment that is central to the Industrial Strategy and the Creative Industries Sector Deal.

[Press release: New Charity Inquiry: CAWRM Ltd](#)

Charity regulator opens investigation into charity known as Jerusalem Merit

[Press release: New Charity Inquiry: CAWRM Ltd](#)



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into CAWRM Ltd ([1178193](#)). The inquiry was opened on 28 November 2018.

The charity's object is to relieve poverty and financial hardship in particular, but not exclusively, amongst refugees in the Middle East.

The inquiry was opened after the Commission carried out a compliance visit to CAWRM Ltd which highlighted serious regulatory concerns including:

- the charity's funds having been held in the personal bank account of an individual linked to the charity, at a time during which the individual was under police investigation for terrorist financing offences;
- that not all of the funds held by the individual had been repaid to the charity;
- charitable funds being put at risk by the couriering of significant amounts of cash out of the UK to the Middle East, with approximately £45,000 transferred in this manner in the first half of 2018;
- the unauthorised employment and remuneration of a trustee;
- unexplained large payments to a limited company whose sole director is the individual linked to the charity; and
- the inability to account for the charity's funds before it was registered with the Commission.

The Commission has issued an order under section 76(3)(f) of the Charities Act restricting certain transactions that the trustees can enter into without the Commission's prior consent.

In order to address these serious regulatory concerns, the investigation will consider:

- the administration, governance and management of the charity by its trustees;
- the financial controls and management of the charity and whether its funds have been properly expended solely for exclusively charitable purposes and can be accounted for; and
- whether or not the trustees have complied with and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities as trustees under charity law.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk).

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the [about us](https://gov.uk/about-us) page on GOV.UK.
2. Search for charities on our [check charity](https://gov.uk/check-charity) tool.
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.

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News story: Defence Secretary sets sights on next century of British air power

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson has today revealed that Britain's combat air power has reached new heights whilst speaking in a brand-new hangar displaying one-hundred years of fighter jets.

Speaking at RAF Marham, the Defence Secretary announced the UK now has nine F-35 Lightning jets ready to be deployed on operations around the world.

The F-35 Lightnings will form the backbone of the UK's combat air fleet alongside the Typhoon jets, which the Defence Secretary also announced have now been fitted with a state-of-the-art complex weapons suite to vastly increase its capability.

Under 'Project Centurion', worth £425m over the past three years, the Typhoon now has deep strike cruise missile Storm Shadow, air-to-air missile Meteor and the precision attack missile Brimstone at their disposal.

It means the jets have boosted capabilities to intercept airborne missiles and strike ground based targets, seamlessly taking over from the Tornado's attack role as it nears retirement.

Completed on-time and to budget, the upgrades transform the fleet into a world-leading multi-role combat air platform for decades to come.

Military engineers and personnel have worked together with hundreds of UK workers from British defence firms including BAE Systems, MBDA and Leonardo to reach the milestone.

The Defence Secretary made the announcement in front of four different aircraft, in a brand-new maintenance hangar at RAF Marham, which he opened today along with a state-of-the-art new training centre.

These facilities, along with resurfaced runways and new landing pads to accommodate the jet's ability to land vertically, are a key part of the £550m being invested in the Norfolk base.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

As we bid farewell to the RAF's first century, we are setting our sights on the next 100 years. Our nation is moving into a new era outside the EU, and our huge achievements in air capability make our commitment to a role on the world stage clear to both our

allies and our enemies.

The incredible F-35 jets are ready for operations, a transformed Typhoon has the power to dominate the skies into the 2040s and we continue to look even further into an ambitious future. The RAF has long shown Britain at its great and global best, and today it lifts our nation to even greater heights.

The year ahead will see the F-35 Lightning pilots and ground crew continue learning how to operate and maintain the jets in the new centre, which features state-of-the-art simulators, classrooms, and physical aircraft mock-ups.

The facility provides a real-life training environment replicating the challenges that both pilots and crew will face in supporting and operating the F-35 Lightning.

Pilots from 617 Squadron, who are already based at RAF Marham, will practice flying the next generation aircraft from four full mission simulators.

Having the F-35s ready for operations on time is a huge landmark in what is the biggest defence project in history, which the UK has been a leading partner in for almost 25 years.

Around 150 UK personnel had been working with the jets in the US before the first batch of aircraft came to the UK last summer.

Not only does the programme offer the UK a game-changing military capability, but with British industry manufacturing 15% of a global orderbook of over 3,000 jets, it supports around 25,000 UK jobs and is projected to be worth around £35bn to the national economy.

The Defence Secretary made the announcement in front of four aircraft, which represent the past and future of British fighter jets.

They included the Tornado, which has been in-service since 1979, making its combat debut in the 1991 Gulf War, and which will be retired later this year.

Its unique capabilities have now been transferred to the Typhoon.

In addition to the Typhoon and F-35, the Tempest concept fighter jet model was also on show.

The model, which represents an example of what the UK's future capability might look like, was unveiled last Summer at Farnborough International Air Show, when the Defence Secretary launched the nation's Combat Air Strategy to ensure the UK remains a world-leader in the sector for years to come.

The aim is then for a next-generation capability to have initial operational capability by 2035.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier said:

I am proud to confirm that the RAF's Combat Air capability has taken yet another significant step towards the realisation of our Next Generation Air Force. With its cutting-edge stealth technology, our F-35s are now ready to deploy on operations and, alongside our combat-proven Typhoon, offer a step-change in our ability to employ air power around the world.

Furthermore, the successful integration of Stormshadow, Brimstone and Meteor on Typhoon completes and enhances the transition of world-class capabilities from Tornado and allows a stalwart of the RAF's Combat Air inventory to retire from service.

The successful attainment of these milestones and the potential offered by Project TEMPEST will continue to assure the RAF's ability to protect the nation, defend the United Kingdom's interests and support the national prosperity agenda now and well into the future.

The RAF has already trialled its Typhoon and F-35 Forces' interoperability.

In a series of operational trials, the evidence clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of both platforms when operating alongside one another.

With its larger payload and increased agility and range, the Typhoon will operate in concert with the stealthy F-35 and its next-generation sensors, making the RAF one of the few air forces with the ability to exploit the synergy of 4th and 5th generation combat aircraft and delivering the UK a potent force equipped to counter evolving threats in the global environment.

The UK is a world-leader in the combat air sector, which supports over 18,000 highly skilled jobs with a mix of skills and technologies unique in Europe.

The sector delivers a turnover in excess of £6bn a year and has made up over 80% of defence exports from the UK over the last ten years.

[Press release: Fishing industry](#)

encouraged to get ready for EU catch certificates in the event of a no deal

Advice on preparing for the introduction of catch certificates part of contingency planning