

# [News story: New centre for immersive storytelling will help UK industry excel](#)

The Centre for Immersive Storytelling will ensure that the UK's creative workforce has world-leading skills in the use of virtual, augmented and mixed reality technologies.

It is being funded by [UK Research and Innovation](#) through its £33 million audience of the future programme, which forms part of government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

The centre will be run by winning bidders, the [National Film and Television School](#) (NFTS) and [Royal Holloway University](#).

## **Creative training in immersive technology**

The centre will offer creative training and research programmes in immersive storytelling, initially to screen professionals.

They will be able to take part in experimental labs, workshops, placements and courses through the centre, which will also support and co-fund real immersive productions.

In the longer term, the centre will offer master's degrees across a range of immersive specialisms.

## **New audiences and ground-breaking content**

The winning bidders were announced by Andrew Chitty, UK Research and Innovation Challenge Director, at [Raindance Film Festival](#). Andrew said:

The UK has an opportunity to lead the world in adopting immersive technology to find new audiences and create ground-breaking content. But to do this we need to develop our creative talent to make the best of this new medium.

This exceptional partnership brings together researchers, a world-class film school and partners across the industry, who will not only support the centre but gain the benefit of its graduates.

[The evolution of storytelling](#)

## **Support from screen industry professionals**

The bid by NFTS and Royal Holloway was supported by high-profile people from the creative industry, including Sir Lenny Henry, Asif Kapadia, Georgina Campbell, Sarah Gavron, Steven Moffat, Sue Vertue and Alex Garland.

Sir Lenny Henry commented:

Britain has an amazingly rich heritage and strength in storytelling.

Immersive technologies are an exciting new opportunity for us, but this new frontier for storytelling should be one that really reflects the wealth and diversity of our country's talent.

## **Bringing together industry and academia**

The centre will commission 60 productions that will develop the UK's immersive sector. Organisations across the UK will be selected to lead the projects.

Professor James Bennett, Royal Holloway, said:

This is an exciting partnership between the country's leading screen industries' training provider and one of the UK's top research institutions.

It's a unique collaboration that will bring together industry and academia to explore the exciting creative and commercial opportunities of immersive technologies, placing storytelling at the heart of the work.

Jon Wardle, Director of the NFTS, added:

It is our aim to make immersive another success story for UK plc's world-leading screen industries, by enabling our storytellers of film, TV, games and theatre to exploit this new medium.

We intend to place diversity at the heart of our endeavours, ensuring that the future of immersive storytelling is one that reflects the full breadth of the UK's creative talent.

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## [News story: Alcohol causes 1 in 13 breast cancers](#)



Every year over 55,100 people in the UK are diagnosed with breast cancer with alcohol causing 1 in 13 cases. Alcohol increases the level of oestrogen in the bloodstream and long-term exposure to oestrogens increases the risk of developing breast cancer.

[Drinkaware](#) and Public Health England (PHE) are encouraging women of all ages to cut down on how much they are drinking by taking more drink free days to reduce their risk of developing breast cancer and a range of other health conditions including liver and heart disease.

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## [Press release: Repeat offender has sentence increased after Attorney General's referral](#)

A man found to be in possession of a gun while on bail and subject to a Serious Crime Prevention Order has today had his sentence increased after the Attorney General, Geoffrey Cox QC MP, referred his sentence to the Court of Appeal as unduly lenient.

During a search of 29 year old Mafuta Capitaio's home, police discovered a semi-automatic pistol. In addition to this, they found mobile phones and sim cards that had not been disclosed to law enforcement, as required under restrictions placed on Capitaio following previous imprisonment for robbery and conspiracy to blackmail. At this time Capitaio was also on bail, having been arrested for carrying a lock knife earlier in the year.

Capitao was originally sentenced at Wood Green Crown Court in July, where he was given 5 years 5 months imprisonment. Today, after the Attorney General's referral, the Court of Appeal increased his sentence to 7 years 5 months.

Commenting on the increase, the Attorney General said:

"Capitao has an extensive history of offending, and failed to adhere to the restrictions put upon him. These restrictions are put in place to enable law enforcement to prevent reoffending and protect members of the public; the Court of Appeal's decision today sends a clear message that such breaches will be punished severely."

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## **Open consultation: Geographical Indications (GI): creating UK schemes after EU exit**

We want to know what you think about our proposals for bringing the EU's geographical indication schemes into UK law after EU exit. These cover the protected food name schemes, wine, and spirit schemes.

Key changes include:

- creation and use of new logos
- revising the appeals process

The consultation also addresses some wider wine and spirit sector standards.

A geographical indication (GI) is used to show that a product has a specific geographical source and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that location.

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## **News story: Transport Secretary welcomes progress on East West Rail**

- project works at Bicester will reopen Varsity Line connection closed in 1960s
- completion of enabling works on western section will enable construction to begin in September 2019

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling welcomed a milestone moment for East West Rail during a visit to Bicester today, (4 October 2018) as he saw how enabling works are laying the ground for construction.

Meeting with Network Rail staff on the western section of the route, the minister saw how preparations are laying the foundations for a world-class rail link and significantly better journeys for passengers between Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

East West Rail will transform journeys in one of Europe's most vibrant economic regions, providing passengers and businesses with a transport system that unlocks economic opportunity and drives forward new housing and jobs.

As a hub for technical and scientific innovation, home to world-class universities and a skilled workforce that drives growth, the success of England's economic heartland is imperative to the UK's prosperity and productivity.

Rapid progress on the project means we will see construction underway on direct, fast and reliable services from next year, delivering significantly better connections for passengers.

Chris Grayling met with Rob Brighouse, Chair of the East West Railway Company, who said:

East West Railway Company is working hard with Network Rail to open this line as soon as possible. We're delighted to have the work underway. When open this line will boost economic growth, and make it easier and quicker for people who live here to travel in the local area.

Nigel Tipple – Chief Executive of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership – said:

We welcome the Transport Secretary's visit to Bicester today, which emphasises Oxfordshire's global prospects supporting innovation-led growth, greater productivity and major 'place potential' as we move towards an ever-increasing internationally-focussed economy.

East West Rail has the potential to drive dynamic economic growth. With a GVA of £23 billion per annum, Oxfordshire is one of only 3 counties that are net contributors to the Exchequer and – by leveraging the 2 internationally-renowned cities of Oxford and Cambridge – we can ensure that both communities and 'UK PLC' can capitalise on the economic strengths of this region.

Professor Sir Peter Gregson Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor of Cranfield University, said:

The Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor is a beacon of innovation for the UK, featuring world-leading, research-intensive universities. For the UK to thrive, we must ensure that the potential of the region to boost the UK's skills and productivity is fully unlocked.

As a leading university at the heart of the growth corridor, we believe that increased connectivity across the region is vital to boosting skills and promoting innovation. East West Rail is an important step in that process and we welcome its progress.

Patrick Cawley, Director of Sponsorship for Network Rail's LNW route, said

The preparatory work we are currently carrying out will ensure we are ready to start construction as soon as we can. This will enable us to deliver a first class railway and all of the wider economic benefits it will bring to the local regions.

East West Rail is being built progressively in 3 phases. With phase 1 between Oxford and Bicester already complete, phase 2 will see major track and signalling upgrades extending services from Oxford to Bedford and Milton Keynes to Aylesbury. These works includes the reinstatement of the Varsity line between Bletchley and Claydon Junction, a mothballed section of railway closed since the 1960s.

The project is a vital part of the government's plans to provide the region with a road and rail network fit for the future, improving links to jobs, education, leisure and health services.

The government also recently announced the [preferred corridor for the Oxford to Cambridge expressway](#) will run alongside the East West Rail route, improving links between 2 of the country's intellectual powerhouses and delivering faster, safer and more reliable journeys.

The East West Rail route is divided into 3 sections:

- the western section phase 1 (Oxford to Bicester) and phase 2 (Bicester to Milton Keynes/Bedford and Aylesbury to Milton Keynes)
- the central section (Bedford to Cambridge via Sandy)
- the eastern section (Cambridge to Norwich and Ipswich) – existing railway which could link into East West Rail