

StoryFutures

National Centre for Immersive Storytelling

NFTS

NATIONAL
FILM AND
TELEVISION
SCHOOL



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council



FAQs - StoryFutures National Showcasing Programme **Fund**

Why should I apply?

This is an incredible opportunity for short story based VR experiences to be seen by a UK wide audience. We are providing creators with the opportunity to have their VR experience on over 250 Oculus Quest 2 headsets across the UK. As part of our StoryTrails programme and with additional BFI funding we now have a network of libraries and independent film hubs keen to showcase VR experiences to their audiences.

So if you have a VR experience you'd like to reach a diverse audience across the UK please read on.

Creative & Content

What kind of projects or content are you looking for?

We're looking for companies or freelancers that have existing VR content, or existing content (such as 360 film or other materials) that can be easily repurposed into a 10 minute VR experience for the Oculus Quest 2.

We're looking for story-led content that has an educational or learning aspect. (See more details on this in the next question).

You may have a longer piece that you can cut down or a shorter experience you would like to extend, an unfinished project or a project built for another VR platform (tethered, event based etc).

Please note we're not looking for VR games content.

Are all immersive stories eligible? Do they have to be educational or have a “learning aspect”?

The experiences do not have to be developed for an educational setting, such as a school, or meet a specific learning requirement, i.e. a viewer must learn a particular fact or piece of information. The idea is if you watch the VR experience, the audience will learn something new from it, they will be engaged with a new story or a new way to look at a story.

We suggest you take a look at our previous VR experiences that are currently showcasing in this context in libraries currently to get an idea of what we mean.

See our previous VR experiences here - <https://story-trails.com/about/vr-experiences/>

Who owns the IP?

You will. StoryFutures is asking for the right to showcase these experiences in libraries, and independent film hubs but we're not asking for the ownership of the project.

You will still be able to exhibit the project in other contexts, i.e. you might want to take them to film festivals, or showcase them at other events. What we are asking for is just the right to showcase the experiences and you will own the IP.

Production

Are you looking for projects with an established team in place?

You don't need to have an established team in place. However, you do need to demonstrate to us that you know what is required to complete this project within the budget and within the timeframe.

The budget and the timeframe are both quite tight so we are looking for applications that show us you have the capability to do that. Please demonstrate in your answers that you know what is required, what other people you might need to bring onto the project (producer, developer etc) in order to complete the work. We don't need specific names and please don't add links to IMDb or LinkedIn, you only need to outline the roles that you think you will need and demonstrate your ability to manage to secure those additional people in the timeline and budget allowed.

What support will StoryFutures offer us?

StoryFutures works collaboratively with the freelancers and companies that we fund.

Support is across three main areas -

- Production support: Helping you to keep on track and deliver on time,
- Audience Insight: We have a testing platform, which you will have access to and we will provide more information about that in the launch lab.
- Technical: We can provide technical feedback during production and once your experience is out in the wild being showcased.

Our aim is to make sure that by working with us you can gain experience, build your team and grow your business for future projects.

Eligibility

I'm a freelancer - can I apply?

Yes. You can apply for this if you're a freelancer or if you're a small to medium business. If you are a freelancer you do have to have sole trader status and a UTR number in order for us to be able to pay you.

Please note: Students are not eligible.

I built an experience with another company - can I apply or should they apply?

It's important to be sure that the person who owns the IP applies. So if another company or person owns the IP, either they have to sign over the IP rights to you in order to develop it further in this context, or they need to apply. They could apply in conjunction with you and in the application you can outline that you're the one that's going to be doing the bulk of the work, i.e. doing the adapting or repurposing of the content. However, we will need to contract and fund the owner of the IP.

What stage of production should they be at?

This is funding to adapt existing material so the projects must be complete but maybe not in the right format, length etc. and therefore needs adapting. We will consider incomplete projects but please note this is not 'completion funding' for experiences funded elsewhere that ran over budget or out of funding. If you are unsure please contact us (storyfutures@rhul.ac.uk) to discuss what stage you are at and why.

I have a VR game - will that be admissible?

We are looking for the end result to be a story based 10 minute VR experience. We understand VR is often gamified, so if you have game content you can adapt into a story piece this would be fine but if the end result was a game (such as Beat Sabre/Climbing/ etc) it would not be eligible for this funding.

Please take a look at the type of experiences we have funded for this showcase previously - <https://story-trails.com/about/vr-experiences/>

Budget and Timeframe

There are restrictions on the timeline and budget, is there any flexibility with these?

It's really important to note that there's quite a tight timeframe and budget for this round of funding so please ensure when you apply, you can deliver in this timeframe and budget.

We have to match funds 20% - how does that work?

We are not asking for match cash funds but matched commitment. You might include your time on the project as a matched commitment, or other types of in-kind support such as the purchase software or technical equipment that you use for this project that's not covered in the budget.

Technical

Does my VR piece have to be made for Quest headsets?

Your VR experience must be made for the Meta Oculus Quest 2 headset. In fact many applications we receive the funds may be used to adapt a tethered experience for this headset. We will be putting your experiences onto over 250 Quest headsets in libraries and independent film hubs. Currently we do not plan to submit the experiences to the Oculus Store or into Oculus labs but you are very welcome to do so or to other platforms such as Pico, etc.

Does my project have to run for 10 minutes exactly?

We're keen to have experiences that are quite diverse in content and story, however because of the way we're showcasing these experiences, it's important that they're all very similar in length. Therefore, the experiences need to run as close to 10 minutes as possible, however we will accept 10-12 mins.

Distribution

Where will my VR piece be distributed/shown?

Initially, our Vr experience will be shown in 17 libraries and 5 independent film hubs, located all across the UK on over 250 headssts. The audiences that your project will reach may have never experienced VR before and will be aged from 8 to 80 years old.

This really is a great opportunity for your VR experience to reach a broad and diverse audience across the UK!

Can I go and see an example?

If you would like to do this, please contact us (storyfutures@rhul.ac.uk) for your local library where the VR experiences are currently being showcased.

Do you provide any marketing?

Yes, our marketing team are always delighted to support and share VR work produced in the UK and want to support the industry to ensure it can be seen by as many people as possible. However, we highly encourage your company/team to promote and share your work on your personal social media platforms and/or website.

Please contact us when you plan to promote and market your experience and our MarComms team will provide you with a toolkit.

Is there a launch event? How will cinemas be programming the experiences?

We will not have a launch event or film festival, this call is not like the London Film Festival or Sheffield Docfest (though you are welcome to apply to both with your experience once completed). Your experiences will be shown in libraries on an ongoing basis, and independent film hubs will be launching in June. Each library or cinema is showcasing differently and should you be selected for this funding we will be able to explain more of this in detail at our LaunchLab (see below).

LaunchLab

What is the LaunchLab?

You might have noticed in the application form that we refer to a LaunchLab. It's a one day, online kickoff event where we have masterclasses on creating VR content for diverse audiences, breakout sessions with our R&D and audience insight team and one-on-one sessions for us to learn about your project specifically and lock in your scope of works. There will be a production planning session and an opportunity to meet the other winning applicants.

It's really vital as a way to start the project and get all the information you need so please ensure when you apply that you can attend.

When is it and do I have to attend?

The launch lab is on **Thursday 25th May 2023**, it is a full day and will take place online.

It is compulsory that someone from your team attends, so when you're applying, please make sure you block out that day in your calendars so that you can be available. We ask for a minimum of one person, but you're welcome to have other people join particular sessions that you think they might be relevant to. It will not be recorded because it is highly interactive - we need to ask you questions as well as you ask us questions. It is much easier to get all those questions covered off in a day so you can then get stuck into the production side of things!

We aim to notify you that you're successful on May 17.

Still on the fence?

Please do apply! Or if you have questions, please feel free to send us an email (storyfutures@rhul.ac.uk).

We'd love to hear what you've got and how you think you might be able to adapt it to meet this opportunity. We really look forward to receiving your applications and ultimately to getting your VR experiences out there to a bigger audience.



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