

Press Release

Embargo lifts 00.00, Thursday 18th Oct

## **A Vision For Women and VR: a rallying cry from the women of the UK VR industry**

Today (Thursday 18 October) **A Vision for Women and Virtual Reality** launches at Augmented World Expo.

Funded and developed in collaboration with researchers from ReFig, King's College London and University of Brighton, **A Vision for Women and Virtual Reality** is a vision for the future of the virtual reality industry; its workforce, content and audiences.

In the era of #MeToo, VWVR is a collective visionary document created by 20 influential women in the UK VR industry. According to NESTA, the UK immersive sector has 9% of the global market share. However, only 14% of VR companies in the UK have any female representation in their leadership. EY reports a gender gap in audiences with 20% of UK men experiencing VR vs 14% of women. The majority of VR spaces, tools, experiences and games are being made by men for a male audience.

VWVR aims to make the most of VR's relative 'newness', where norms are still being shaped and the field is still being formed. The vision statement is a rallying cry to steer the industry in a direction that reflects society's best self rather than its worst. It is a response to the present *and* a plan for the future, where the immersive sector challenges the status quo of gender imbalance in related industries. It is a movement to change the future and direction of the virtual reality sector, which, if not steered with a concerted effort will walk the same journey of other industries that have come before it.

Helen Kennedy, Head of the School of Media at the University of Brighton said, "My vision and ambition is to ensure that the empowering tools of VR storytelling are accessible to all and that the stories we tell and the images we create reflect the full diversity of experiences that make up our shared culture. The Vision for Women in VR

is a major landmark in achieving that ambition and I am extraordinarily honoured to have been part of its genesis.”

Dr Sarah Atkinson, Head of Department for Culture, Media and Creative Industries at King’s College London commented, “I am delighted that the vision is being launched at such a high-profile international industry event. We hope it will reach, and ultimately be adopted by a wide range of organisations, from small and medium enterprises to global corporations. We are proud to have played a part in producing this incredibly important document with some of the most influential and inspirational female figures in the UK VR sector.”

For more information on how to support **A Vision for Women and VR**, visit [www.vwvr.org](http://www.vwvr.org).

**A Vision for Women and VR** is supported by Mitch Turnbull (Bramble Media), Emma Hughes (Limina Immersive), Catherine Allen (Limina Immersive), Tessa Ratuszynska (Limina Immersive), Helen Kennedy (University of Brighton), Sarah Atkinson (Kings College London), Isabel Van De Keere (Immersive Rehab), Tanya Laird (Digital Jam Ltd), Dee Harvey (Cloud Rupture), Jayisha Patel (Independent filmmaker and VR creator), Amandine Flachs (Flachs Consulting), Dorothea Gibbs (Third Eye VR), Becca Caddy (Freelance copywriter and features writer), Grace Boyle (The Feelies), Rebecca Gregory-Clarke (Digital Catapult) Samantha Kingston (Virtual Umbrella) and Mária Rakušanová (Curator of Raindance Immersive Stories and Interactive Worlds).

**A Vision for Women and VR** is championed by VR cultural platform, Limina Immersive and supported by King’s College London, The University of Brighton and Refig.

**ENDS**

For more information, please contact  
Eleanor Pender, PR for Limina Immersive  
[eleanor@liminaimmersive.com](mailto:eleanor@liminaimmersive.com) | 07969 305802

## Notes to Editors

Current supporters of **A Vision for Women and VR** are:

Mitch Turnbull, Bramble Media

Emma Hughes, Limina Immersive

Catherine Allen, Limina Immersive

Tessa Ratuszynska, Limina Immersive

Helen Kennedy, University of Brighton

Sarah Atkinson, Kings College London

Isabel Van De Keere, Immersive Rehab

Tanya Laird, Digital Jam Ltd

Dee Harvey, Cloud Rupture

Jayisha Patel, Independent filmmaker and VR creator

Amandine Flachs, Flachs Consulting

Dorothea Gibbs, Third Eye VR

Becca Caddy, Freelance copywriter and features writer

Grace Boyle, The Feelies

Mária Rakušanová, Curator of Raindance Immersive Stories and Interactive Worlds

Rebecca Gregory-Clarke, Digital Catapult

Samantha Kingston, Virtual Umbrella

## Biographies

### Catherine Allen

Founder of Limina Immersive and a VR industry leader, Catherine's work is known for bringing VR to broader audiences who wouldn't describe themselves as early adopters. Named one of the UK's top 3 most influential women working in VR by Onalytica, Catherine was on the BAFTA's founding VR advisory team, has judged VR for a range of international film festivals and authored major industry reports for the public sector. Catherine produced the BBC's first commissioned VR documentary, the award-winning *Easter Rising: Voice of a Rebel* - described by Broadcast Magazine as 'genre-defining' - which toured festivals globally and showed for six weeks at the National Theatre, London. Catherine writes for Wired magazine.

[catherineallen.uk](http://catherineallen.uk) | @ [CatherineAllen](https://twitter.com/CatherineAllen)

### Limina Immersive

Limina's goal is to make immersive media more accessible by diversifying audiences and widening participation in the emerging sector. They are doing this by making it as easy as possible for cultural venues to screen creative VR to their existing audiences. This involves building a range of VR exhibition products for venues - their first being

the Limina VR Exhibition App. The central Bristol-based company is a team of four, and has already worked with clients such as The British Council, the BBC, Telefónica, Encounters Festival, Watershed, The National Theatre of Scotland and Digital Catapult.

[liminaimmersive.com](http://liminaimmersive.com) | [@LiminaImmersive](https://twitter.com/LiminaImmersive)

**Dr Sarah Atkinson**  
**King's College London**

Sarah Atkinson is Head of Department of Culture, Media & Creative Industries, King's College London and co-editor of *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. Sarah has published three books and numerous articles on the impacts of digital technologies on film & cinema audiences and film production practices. Sarah has undertaken extensive work into the Live Cinema economy and is currently working on a number of funded immersive media projects (AHRC/EPSRC, SSHRC & Innovate UK). Sarah has spoken at various international technology forums including the IET Prestige Lecture Series, the international new.New festival, Develop: European Game Developer conference, Sheffield International Documentary Festival, and the European Women in Games Conference. Sarah is also a regular contributor to [The Conversation](http://TheConversation.com).

[www.kcl.ac.uk](http://www.kcl.ac.uk) | [@drsarahatkinson](https://twitter.com/drsarahatkinson)

**Helen W. Kennedy**  
**University of Brighton**

Helen W. Kennedy is Head of Media at the University of Brighton and co-editor of *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. Helen is a lead researcher on [REFIG.ca](http://REFIG.ca) with a specific responsibility for driving forward diversity initiatives across the games and immersive sectors. Along with Limina and Dr Atkinson, Helen has led the Vision for Women in VR since the outset.

[www.brighton.ac.uk](http://www.brighton.ac.uk) | [@ludologista](https://twitter.com/ludologista)

**ReFig**

[REFIG.CA](http://REFIG.CA) is a high-profile international project that seeks to transform the games industry, games education and games culture funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada. REFIG has funded and supported the Vision for Women in VR from conception through to this current launch – including supporting the underpinning research and creative collaborative processes that have been key to the development of this Vision.

[www.refig.ca](http://www.refig.ca) | [@refiggames](https://twitter.com/refiggames)