



THE GLOBAL BUSINESS INNOVATION PROGRAMME

SXSW 2022, Austin, USA – Audience of the Future

The Global Business Innovation Programme – Audience of the Future

is organised by Innovate UK as part of UKRI and delivered by Innovate UK EDGE. It consists of a **preparation phase, a 7-day innovation visit** focussed on the USA Immersive Tech market, a **post-visit exploitation workshop** and **support for approximately 12 months** from an Innovate UK EDGE Innovation and Growth Specialist. The programme is designed to help your business maximise the opportunities identified, including developing innovation projects with partners in the territory.

Innovate UK is committed to ensuring that anyone from any background, has an equal opportunity to be successful.

KEY DATES:

Applications: Open: Monday 25 October 2021 Close: Monday 22 November 2021, 09:00am	Pre-Visit Workshop: Thursday 3 February 2022	Innovation Visit: 9 - 17 March 2022	Exploitation Workshop: June 2022
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Focus Areas

Audience of the Future is a programme funded under Wave 2 of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. This initiative is particularly relevant for businesses in:

- AR/VR/MR/XR
- Haptics, sonics and other sensory interfaces
- Advanced visualisations and display technologies
- AI & 5G

These sectors will fundamentally change products and services over the next 20 years and transform how we experience the world. Internationally, **Audience of the Future** represents one of the largest targeted research and innovation programmes in immersive technology and experiences.

Why SXSW in Austin, Texas?

Austin is home to **South by Southwest (SXSW)**, best known for its conference and festivals that see the convergence of tech, film, music, education, and culture. The annual March event features sessions, showcases, exhibitions, professional development, and various networking opportunities.

SXSW 2022 will be the chance for digital creatives to hear cutting-edge ideas, discover new interests, and network with other professionals who share a similar appetite for forward-focused experiences.

Benefits:

- Explore future USA immersive tech opportunities.
- Gain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities of doing business in the USA.
- Find potential innovation collaborators and partners and develop your network in the UK and globally.
- Improve your company value proposition to international partners and investors.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

The Global Business Innovation Programme is structured around three main phases. Each business will have a designated Innovate UK EDGE Innovation and Growth Specialist to support them for the duration of the offering, including developing an action plan to capitalise on the opportunities identified. The three main phases are:

- **Getting ready for the market:** Pre-activity briefing workshop and tailored virtual upskilling sessions to build knowledge and understanding of the US market and potential opportunities, including how to do business, cultural aspects, how to protect your IP and improve your pitch.
- **Visiting the market:** Explore the innovation opportunities at SXSW in the USA through meeting with key companies and potential collaborators and partners (5-day visit).
- **Exploiting the opportunity:** An exploitation workshop and one-to-one support from an Innovate UK EDGE Innovation and Growth Specialist to follow up and take advantage of the opportunities identified.

INNOVATION VISIT – EXAMPLE ITINERARY (subject to change):

Date	Activity
Wednesday 9 March 2022	Depart the UK and arrive in Austin
Friday 11 - Thursday 17 March 2022	Programme in Austin with attendance at SXSW
Thursday 17 March 2022	Depart Austin in the evening to return to the UK (arrival on 18 th March)

TO APPLY FOR THIS INITIATIVE, YOU MUST:

Be a UK-based innovation-led company with ambitions to grow and internationalise.

Be a company with fewer than 500 employees.

Be able to attend and complete all activities.

WHAT IS THE COST?

Innovate UK, Innovate UK EDGE and the Audience of the Future Challenge will fund and organise flights, accommodation, and conference fees for successful applicants. Innovate UK will also pay for any reasonable adjustments throughout the initiative. Only one representative from each company will be funded. On acceptance, a **commitment fee of £500+VAT** will be obtained from each delegate, which will be **refunded on completion** of the full activities and agreed action plan. Non-completion after formal acceptance may result in forfeiting some or all the commitment fee.

HOW TO APPLY?

The Global Business Innovation Programme has a competitive application process where only the best applications will be successful following an evaluation process. All applications must be made online through the Innovate UK EDGE website and received no later than **Monday 22nd November 2021, 9:00am**.

Innovate UK is committed to improving the diversity of who we support. As such, we welcome applications from under-represented groups.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE:

Please note: Successful applicants will be expected to fully comply with any conditions of travel to the United States as well as any local regulations on face covering and social distancing. As such, you might be required to provide proof of vaccination, valid travel medical insurance and/or negative covid-19 test ahead of travelling to the United States.

The safety of our delegation is our top priority. COVID-19 mitigation measures are still being finalised. If the COVID-19 situation does not allow us to travel to the market, a virtual visit may be considered.

To fill in the online application form, please visit the [Innovate UK EDGE website here](#).

For more information, assistance with your application or to discuss accessibility needs, please contact Innovate UK EDGE London at virgilia.kasbarian@innovateukedge.ukri.org.