



## VR Innovation Project - Life Skills for Employment in COVID-19 Era Through VR Innovation Project

### Another revolutionary idea from C4FF

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**Although this project proposal is about Life skills development helping young and old find worthwhile jobs, VR offers a range of solutions in several other areas. The article gives a brief summary of the proposed project and also the future possibilities with VR.**

The disruptive effects of the COVID-19 outbreak have impacted almost all sectors of our society, tertiary education is no exception. A study by Aucejo et al (2020) surveyed approximately 1500 students and reported that the outbreak had large negative effects on students' current labour market participation and expectations about post-college labour outcomes. Around 40% of students lost a job, internship, or a job offer, and 61% reported to have a family member that experienced a reduction in income. The pandemic also had a substantial impact on students' expectations about their labour market prospects post-college/university. For example, their perceived probability of finding a job before graduation decreased by almost 20%. They are now competing not only with other graduates but also many experienced workers who have lost their jobs recently.

In the UK 700,000 experienced workforce have lost their jobs due to the pandemic (ONS, September 2020). The situation in other EU member states is not dissimilar. All these issues have increased stress and anxiety leading to mental health issues among the younger generation which has less experience of coping with stress. Emergency measures are required to put in place support to help them realise their strengths, develop missing skills and boost their confidence which will ultimately help in avoiding mental health related issues by combining the VR technology and John Holland's personality criteria known as RAISEC – according to which people and work environments can be classified according to six basic types: Doers (Realistic), Thinkers (Investigative), Creators (Artistic), Helpers (Social), Persuaders (Enterprising) or Organizers (Conventional).

RAISEC provides young people with an opportunity to understand what areas they are inclined to succeed in. The application of RAISEC is combined with the development of key skills (Ziarati, 2020) which gives job applicants a greater chance of finding and keeping a job such as i) developing and managing oneself, ii) working as a member of a team, iii) communicating effectively, iv) maintaining physical and mental fitness, v) applying technology, vi) managing time, vii) defining and solving problems and viii) design skills.

With an affordable, accessible and fun app those graduated during the Covid-19 pandemic (Generation C) are given a means to know their strengths, skills and abilities better and to



hunt for their future occupations. The proposed project intends to take full advantage of VR both as a tool to identify interest and strength and to develop key life skills required by the labour market.

The VR industry is growing fast, with the market for virtual reality hardware and software projected to increase from 6.2 billion U.S. dollars in 2019 to more than 16 billion U.S. dollars by 2022 (Source: Statista.com). With a set of well thought tests, the proposed app will allow users to take part in carefully organised quizzes that they will experience for themselves without getting bored or finding dreadfully dull. Our proposed project aims to solve the problem of giving the youth the necessary skills and knowledge of what their skills and abilities are and in which occupation they can excel in and have a bright future. By approaching the issue at the earliest stage, the aim is to prepare the young and to reduce stress and future dissatisfaction and provide a glance of future opportunities. The users will be able to recognise missing skills and thus focus on the important aspects by themselves and therefore will be able to eliminate skills mismatching and develop key skills. Also, by knowing their strong points the Generation C will be able to develop themselves to higher levels in seeking and retaining good and well paid jobs.

The VR proposed solution will have many more applications providing 3D visualisation of technical or non-technical information for learning new situations, acquiring new skills or simply helping us to navigate a new location or perform our jobs better. It can be used as a ship or boat simulator or navigation system. The proposed system can also capture information for analysis later and so forth. The combination of smart phones and VR technology can revolutionise the way we live and learn. What about using the VR devices for detecting dangers on our path for those with visual impairment or helping us have access to information at meetings.

The project could support some of the work initiated by C4FF to help design new AI software to develop new VR applications. With C4FF's track record of developing novel AI solutions there is an expectation that a number of disruptive products and services will be introduced in the application of computer technology in our daily jobs and lives.