

# Virtual Reality: The Digital Frontier of Engagement

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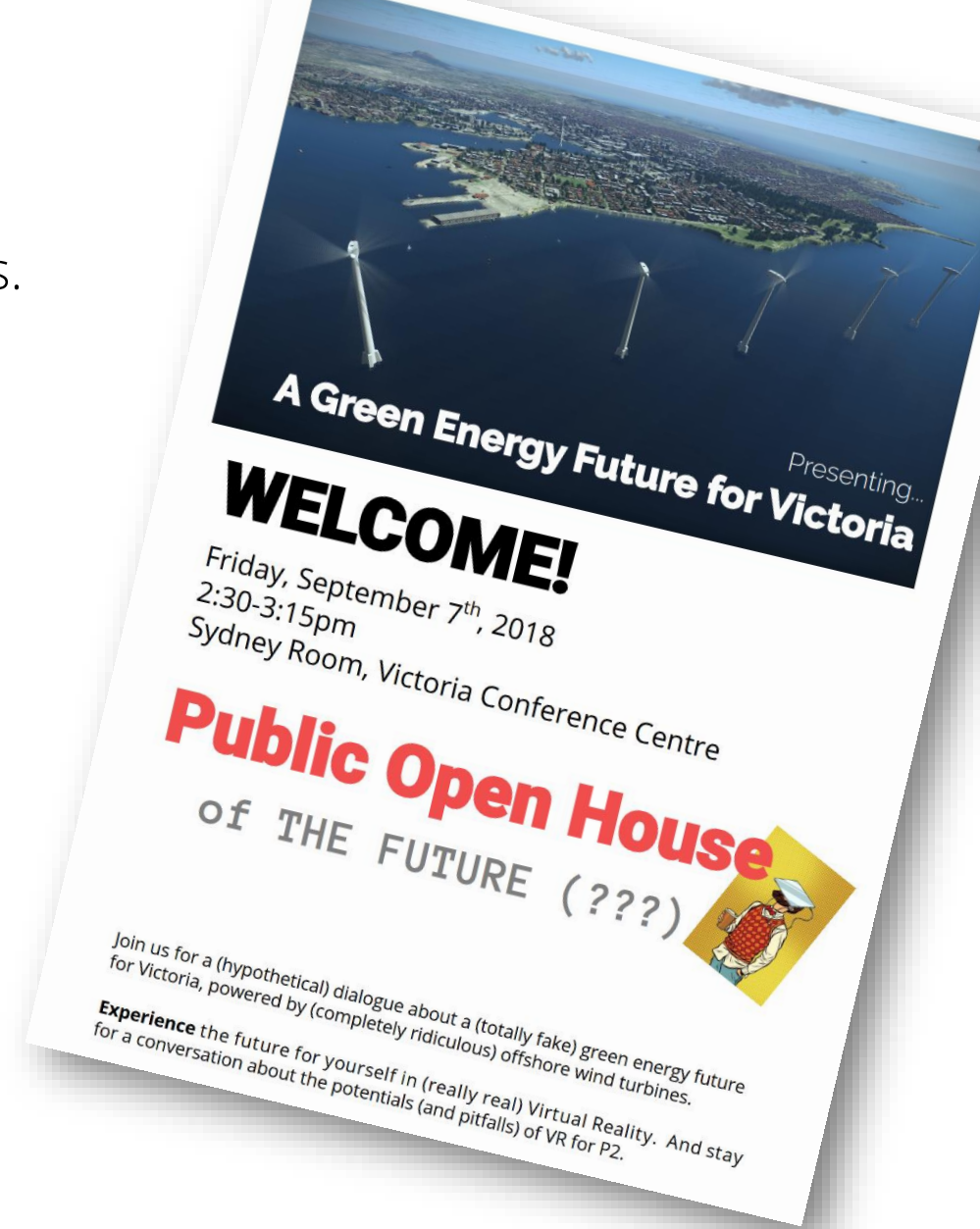


# Session Description

Virtual Reality (VR) allows us to visit spaces we can't otherwise access, explore places that don't yet exist, communicate visions of the future, tell powerful stories and illustrate our imaginations. The technology has the potential to elevate engagement, promote imagination and creativity, and improve the overall accessibility of technical undertakings like physical planning and infrastructure development. What will be the impact of this technology for planners and P2 professionals? How will it change the conversation with the public? What do you need to know?

At the IAP2 2018 North America Conference, we invited conference attendees to a (hypothetical) dialogue about a (totally fake) green energy future for Victoria, powered by (completely ridiculous) offshore wind turbines.

At this mock public open house of the future, conference goers were invited to experience VR first-hand and to a conversation about the potentials (and pitfalls) of VR for P2.







## Experience VR

You can check out the VR experiences we shared with participants at the links below using either your browser or smartphone. Created with the City of Victoria open data 3D model and using the Esri program [City Engine](#), these 360° visualizations provide a quick demonstration of the potentials of immersive 3D for highly visual engagement.

[youtu.be/syEDiTmQjcl](https://youtu.be/syEDiTmQjcl)

[roundme.com/tour/301382/view/965692/](https://roundme.com/tour/301382/view/965692/)

# Dialogue Summary

Following the mock public open house, session participants were engaged in a facilitated dialogue about their reactions to the experience and what they saw as the potentials and pitfalls of VR for P2. Below is a brief summary of just some of that fascinating conversation. Thank you to Anneliese Apel for capturing the conversation!

- 📺 Powerful way to show the pedestrian-eye view
- 📺 Could be useful to transport participants to locations they could not otherwise access
- 📺 Concern that developing content could be cost-prohibitive
- 📺 Although the format got people up and moving around, once they were in VR, participants were disconnected from their fellow attendees and totally oblivious to their (real) surroundings
- 📺 The technology itself might distract from the actual engagement. Will participants be “wowed” by the tech and miss out on the engagement?
- 📺 Although powerful, may fall more on the “inform” end of the spectrum, unless supplemented by some great follow-up conversation
- 📺 There are considerations around inclusion and accessibility. What about those with visual impairments?
- 📺 This could demonstrate innovation to participants on the part of the engagement sponsor
- 📺 Would be better the more realistic it could be



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# Get in touch!

Please contact us if you would like to know more or have thoughts you would like to add to the conversation about VR for P2!

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