

Reimagining mining for Zero Harm

The winner of the Reimagining Training in Mining Innovation Showcase (the Showcase) is WinWin International with the Boiler Room and BizAR Reality first and second runners up respectively.



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Health & Safety (H&S) and environment are expected to benefit from the integration of 4IR technologies. The Showcase is an open innovation challenge that investigates the use of technology in training to upskill and reskill the mining workforce effectively for the 4IR.

The other finalists were Virtutec, Edutouch and sts3D.

"Extended reality, VR, AR and mixed reality technologies allow employees to learn in a safe environment while being fully immersed and interacting with virtual information in real-time as they encounter their physical environment – such as equipment or hazards, among others," says Mustak Ally, head of skills development at the Council.

"The piloting of new technology in the mining industry can optimise the cost-effectiveness of training while taking the industry closer to its ultimate goal of Zero Harm," he adds.

Identifying training innovations

At the beginning of 2021, the Council and Harmony, in partnership with RIIS, set out to identify ready-to-implement training innovations for piloting in Harmony's operational context.

A call for proposals resulted in the submission of solutions that feature virtual, augmented and mixed reality solutions as well as components of gamification that could be used to revolutionise skills training in mining.

During July and August, a panel of judges comprising the Council, Harmony's learning & development, technology and H&S teams, and behaviour experts shortlisted the top six submissions.

These finalists went through a final round of judging by showcasing their innovations at virtual and physical events on the 30 September and 1 October.

People-centred innovation

"The Council is looking at innovation and modernisation not just from a technology perspective, but importantly also to support social and business model change – moving from purely engineering-led innovation to people-centred innovation," says Sietse van der Woude, a senior executive of modernisation and safety at the Council.

The Council recognises that innovative approaches to training and learning, leveraging cognitive and behavioural sciences, enhances the effectiveness of training delivery through improved understanding, better retention, increasing motivation, and embedding positive behaviours.

These trends, in combination with 4IR technologies, have great potential to improve healthy and safe production outcomes.

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