

CUTTING EDGE VR ENABLES INCLUSIVE DESIGN APPROACH

OUR PEOPLE + OUR PROCESS + OUR TECHNOLOGY

CASE STUDY



IMAGE 01- Architects and the Student Services EDI Team with the FULmax

“ The FULmax is useful when providing design information to end users

Architects from Associated Architects adopted the ‘FULmax’ an immersive VR CAVE to help make effective design decisions in conjunction with the University of Birmingham’s Student Services Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team, ensuring appropriate accessibility for the exciting New University Station Project.

In 2018 the University of Birmingham invested in Collaborative VR CAVE technology to support the effective management of their estate. At Fulcro, innovative technology is a fundamental pillar in our work and we were engaged to deliver one of our acclaimed VR CAVEs, known as the ‘FULmax’, to the university.

FULmax is a product range with several different sizes, the UoB selected the CUBE model for this application due to its compact nature.

An inclusive design session was held in the FULmax Cube at the Estates Building located on the main University of Birmingham campus – a short walk from where the new station will be built.

The FULmax provided a simple way for the architects to communicate their 3D design to the University team in one-to-one scale.

This point was confirmed by Warren Jukes of Associated Architects who mentioned that ‘The FULmax is useful when providing design information to end users’, adding, ‘as part of my role I am used to working in 3D, however, it is useful when showing designs to others who are used to working in 2D or those who aren’t in the design team.’ His colleague and fellow architect, Ben Barker, commented on the accessibility of the FULmax and how it allows easy collaboration with many people at once. Ben said, in his experience some people have found that Virtual Reality headsets can make them feel dizzy.

However, FULmax users do not need to wear headsets and can still enjoy a fully immersive experience. Critically this is achieved together as a group, something that supported the session’s overall topic of accessibility.



IMAGE 02 - University Station within the FULmax

“ Helpful to track the issues in real time

For most members of the University’s EDI Team this was their first time using the FULmax. Sue Onens and Kofi Currid-Goode (members of the EDI Team) noted how useful it was to provide feedback in real time to the architects, as the session involved running through the considerations made to ensure compliant accessibility for disabled people wishing to use the train station. They were impressed by their first use stating that it is ‘helpful to track the issues in real time’.

Peter Collins (another member of the EDI Team) was impressed by the FULmax, and he ‘loved the immersive experience’ it gave users.

Overall, the use of collaborative VR CAVEs, in design, to support effective decision making and stakeholder engagement was well demonstrated.

In today’s world the ability to take a team of people into a virtual view of a project is becoming a must have for those organisations who wish to work smarter in the built environment.

We would like to thank the team at Associated Architects and their host, The University of Birmingham, for a great day of collaboration and inclusive design review



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If you wish to find out more about Fulcro and its FULmax VR CAVEs, please do make contact as follows:

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