



Press Release  
18/01/2023

## **Launch of a Supplierthon for the „Metaverse and other Virtual Experiences“ to crowd-source Innovation – apply now!**

+++ Call for Metaverse solutions to solve specific industrial challenges +++ Opportunity of a partnership with the BMW Group for the winning teams+++

**Munich.** The BMW Group Supplierthon with a focus on the “Metaverse and other Virtual Experiences” is starting today. The aim is to attract researchers, startups and pioneering tech leaders from within the global Metaverse community in order to gain an outside-in perspective.

**Application here:** [Link to Metaverse Supplierthon](#)

The Metaverse is the next iteration of the internet: a single, shared, persistent, immersive, 3D virtual space where humans experience life in ways they could not in the physical world. The Supplierthon will empower applicants to bring their innovative and visionary ideas for the Metaverse to life. Experts from the BMW Group have identified challenges in three different areas (for details see below): **Vehicle Readiness, In-Car Experience** and **Virtual Ecosystems**. The BMW Group believes that virtual experiences could make a significant difference by strengthening the entire customer experience and the product substance and could have an impact on the whole automotive industry in the future.

Registration begins today and the first deadline for submission is March 15, 2023. The ideas that are submitted will be examined and judged by a panel of experts who will select the finalists. They will proceed to the second round, where the ideas will be developed further to produce real business solutions by May 10, 2023. The second round will end with a pitch event where the finalists will present their solutions to a panel of experts before the winners are selected on May 24, 2023. The winners will have the opportunity



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to partner with the BMW Group and will also be involved in the implementation of pilot projects.

### **The BMW Group is a pioneer when it comes to virtualization and is now taking one step further**

The Supplierthon for the “Metaverse and other Virtual Experiences” highlights the fact that the BMW Group is playing a leading role in efforts to bring the next level of digitalized human interaction to life. The BMW Group is generating value by consistently developing greater interaction and more immersive experiences using XR<sup>1</sup> and Web 3.0, building on a vivid landscape of use cases, some of which are already connected, along the entire value chain. To ensure that its solution is coherent, the BMW Group is currently developing a strategic, centralized Metaverse Platform.

In December 2022, the company became one of the first automotive manufacturers to join the Metaverse Standards Forum. The company takes a holistic approach across three strategic dimensions: a Corporate Metaverse, a Commercial Metaverse and an In-Car Metaverse, as recently demonstrated by the BMW i Vision Dee vehicle and its Mixed Reality Slider, which was presented at the CES in Las Vegas. The Metaverse Supplierthon will focus only on in-car use cases.

“From our perspective, our industry is in the process of a step by step transformation, shifting human experiences into a virtual world driven by the metaverse.” says Rudi Bencker, Senior Vice President Global Research, Tech Offices and Development Cooperations.



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“With this Crowd Innovation Challenge we want to take the next step and invite the global metaverse community to share their innovative and visionary approaches within the Metaverse spectrum.” says Florian Weig, Senior Vice President Purchasing and Supplier Network Digital.

### **Specific Challenges for the Metaverse Supplierthon**

- **Vehicle Readiness:**

Creating the right infrastructure with new technologies such as 5G, cloud computing and human interfaces (for example, smart glasses, wearables and biosensors) will be a critical part of this evolution. With the help of mixed reality technologies such as AR<sup>2</sup> and VR<sup>3</sup>, IoT, machine learning and sensor technology, the physical vehicle will merge with the virtual world to enhance various touchpoints of future premium mobility.

- **In-Car Experience:**

Metaverse-ready vehicles will create more immersive in-car experiences. By integrating the latest trends for CE-specific devices, such as headsets, glasses and sensor systems, both driver and (rear seat) passengers will be able to interact with the vehicle in different ways and the physical and digital worlds will be merged in real time. Interoperability between different platforms will allow users access to all kinds of content in one place, creating even more interactive and personalized experiences.

- **Virtual Ecosystems:**

Due to its open and decentralized nature, the Metaverse not only introduces a whole new society, but also an ecosystem with new opportunities for the automotive sector. With underlying blockchain-based technologies such as



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cryptocurrencies, assets and smart contracts, the Metaverse opens up new business opportunities along the entire customer journey. From new businesses (for example car configurators and NFT marketplaces) to aftersales, an entirely new virtual ecosystem will be created, enabling customers to experience and engage with the brand in completely new ways.

- **Methodology of a Supplierthon:**

A Supplierthon is a forward-looking innovation scouting method that allows new partners to be identified and supports quick onboarding into the BMW Group ecosystem. The BMW Group has achieved significant results from past challenges, which focused on Quantum Computing, Smart Cities and Connected Car technologies. Using a peer-review process, we identify finalists with high potential. The winners of the challenge will be made public and will have the opportunity to present their solution at the BMW Group's digitalization days.

<sup>1</sup>Extended Reality (XR): Multisensory extended reality integrates Mixed Reality (MR), Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and the five traditional senses, including sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

<sup>2</sup>Augmented Reality (AR) describes the computer-aided extension of reality perception.

<sup>3</sup>Virtual Reality (VR) is the representation and simultaneous perception of an apparent reality and its physical properties in a real-time computer-generated, interactive virtual environment.

<sup>4</sup>Mixed Reality (MR) comprises environments or systems that mix natural and artificial perception.



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### The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2022, the BMW Group sold nearly 2.4 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2021 was € 16.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 111.2 billion. As of 31 December 2021, the BMW Group had a workforce of 118,909 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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