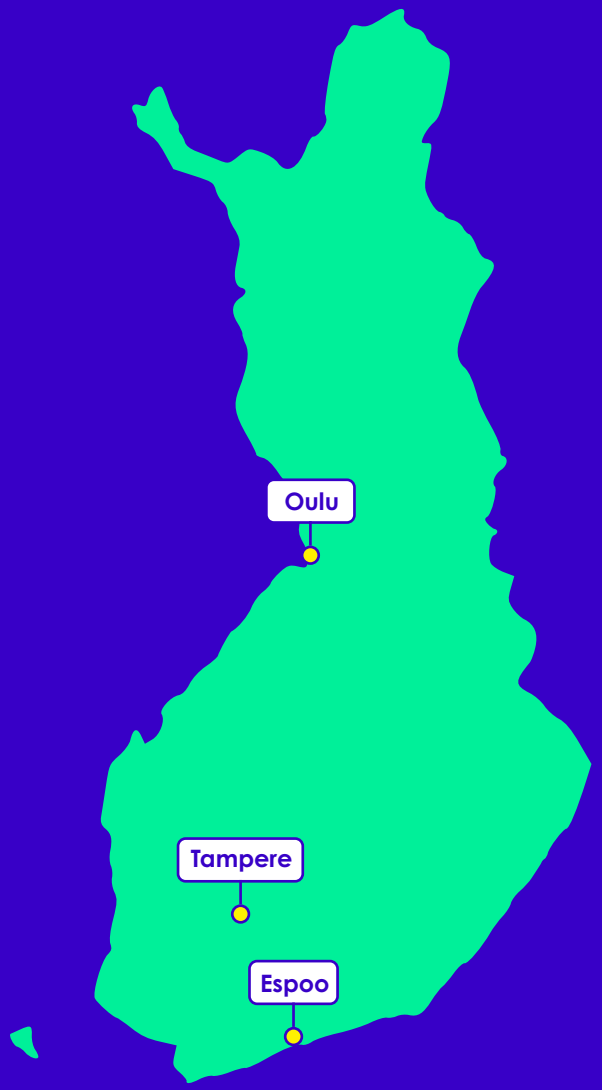
innocities | FINverse

In Finland, Virtual Is Reality

How Finnish cities are reimagining urban development in the metaverse



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The metaverse is shared virtual reality. 3D spaces wired together so people can move between them. You can teach a class in it. You can sit in a fighter jet cockpit. You can walk through a building before the first shovel hits the ground. In Finland, the network working out what cities can do with it is called FINverse. The question they keep returning to: what is a city actually for in the metaverse?

Oulu, Tampere, and Espoo are three Innocities working with researchers and companies on what cities can actually do with the metaverse.

Oulu. The city where companies build the infrastructure the metaverse runs on: connectivity, spatial computing, edge processing. Plus its own local metaverse ecosystem, the Ouluverse, already up and running.

Tampere. Leads x-CITE, the EU-funded project building Europe's citiverse framework with Rotterdam, Flanders, and Istanbul. Won the Enabling Technologies prize at the World Smart City Awards in Barcelona in 2023. Hosts Imagine the Citiverse, the annual meeting point for city leaders and companies working on real urban challenges.

Espoo. Sixth in Europe for patent applications. Second place in the European Capital of Innovation Awards, twice. The only Nordic city in the main category final at the World Smart City Awards in Barcelona in 2024. The kind of place start-ups and growth companies want to be, and where green and digital work actually ships.

1.

First country in Europe with a comprehensive national metaverse strategy

250

companies in the network

€30 B

Expected rise in Finland's metaverse industry by 2035

Why Finland?

Finland is one of the world's most digitalized countries. Nearly all essential public services are available online. Education runs on it. So does much of everyday life. In many ways, Finland is more ready for new technology than most. That's why cities here dare to make themselves the test platform. People trust technology because it's been made worth trusting.

Cities, universities, and companies in Finland have short distances between them. Not just geographically. They share results, problems, and lessons learned. What happens in one city is known in the next. Collaboration runs deep.

Around them is a layer of companies that are world-class at bringing VR and AR into the real world — building things that create real value for organizations globally.

That's why Finland. Strong technical know-how meets laws and processes that make developing the metaverse a safe place to do it.

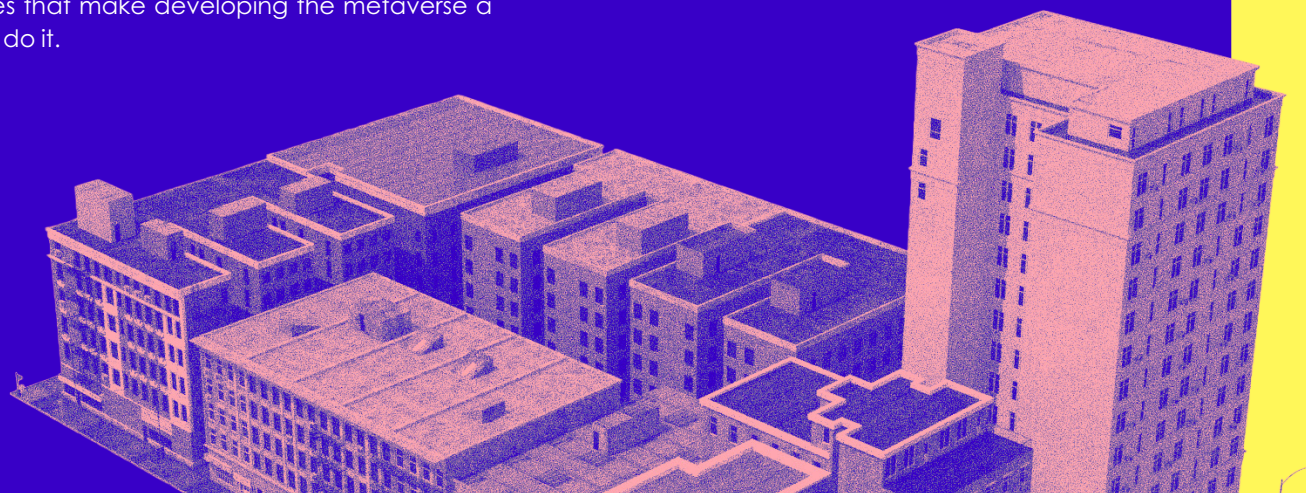
What is already happening?

In education: Virtual classrooms, operating rooms, maternity wards, and power grid control rooms. Students learn by doing.

In culture: The National Opera designed its spaces virtually before touching a wall. Museums are testing what immersive 3D does to storytelling.

In urban planning: Cities build digital twins of themselves. Citizens and planners look at the same thing and see the same thing.

And the companies behind it. Finnish firms make the tools the world uses. Headsets worn by surgeons and pilots in training. Platforms cities use to model what they're about to build. The technology is made here.



Collaboration? That's what we do best.

When cities are built on a 20-year horizon, it pays to leave room for the metaverse. Finnish cities have been ahead on what it actually takes to operate across physical, augmented and virtual spaces. As the technology matures, we're ready for what comes next. Get in touch. Ask how we made it work.

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InnoCities create opportunities for urban developers, businesses and researchers to develop, come together and brainstorm.

The aim of InnoCities is to strengthen the expertise and collaboration of urban areas, to create international-level innovation and experimentation environments and to create new business ecosystems.

Together, 18 cities are making Finland the most innovative country in the world.

Learn more about what they do at:

innocities.fi

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