

Japanese engineers develop headset-less VR system

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The 8K:VR Ride resembles a cross between a theme park ride and a miniature IMAX theatre

A virtual reality "space ride" in which viewers feel as if they are flying through the air inside a giant glass ball has been developed in Japan.

Unlike conventional VR systems, the "8K:VR Ride"—which resembles a cross between a theme park ride and a miniature IMAX theatre—does not require users to wear any headgear.

Instead they are placed on two swivelling, elevated chairs just in front of a semi-spherical screen which entirely engulfs their field of [vision](#).

"Unlike the conventional flat screen, you can see images coming closer to you physically in this dome screen," said Makoto Nakahira, an engineer at Wonder Vision Techno Laboratory.

"This is a system in which you can experience visuals that you have never seen before."

The experimental technology was unveiled to Japanese media for the first time on Tuesday before a scheduled showing at Japan's Digital

Content Expo 2017 in October.

Its name refers to the screen's super-high definition 8K [technology](#), which is 16 times more detailed than most current HD images.

Wonder Vision co-developed the system with Japan-based NHK Enterprises and NHK Media Technology—both affiliated with public broadcaster NHK—and RecoChoku Labo.

The space ride was first showcased at SXSW 2017, a major conference on convergence in the interactive, film and music industries, in Austin, Texas in March.

The [system](#) features a hemispherical theatre known as Sphere 5.2—a screen 5.2 metres (17 feet) wide, 3.4 metres tall and 2.6 metres deep.

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