

# BCIMO launches state-of-the-art event facilities

November 13, 2023



The Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre (VLRNIC), operated by the Black Country Innovative Manufacturing Organisation (BCIMO), has launched its brand-new [Meeting and Events Spaces](#) to complement its other unique facilities and services.

From November 2023, the VLRNIC will offer a choice of six modern, hi-tech and flexible spaces, making it an ideal venue for a range of business meeting, training, networking and exhibiting / showcasing needs.

The venue is the Black Country's newest in the meeting and events arena with spaces capable of accommodating from 8 to 170 guests.

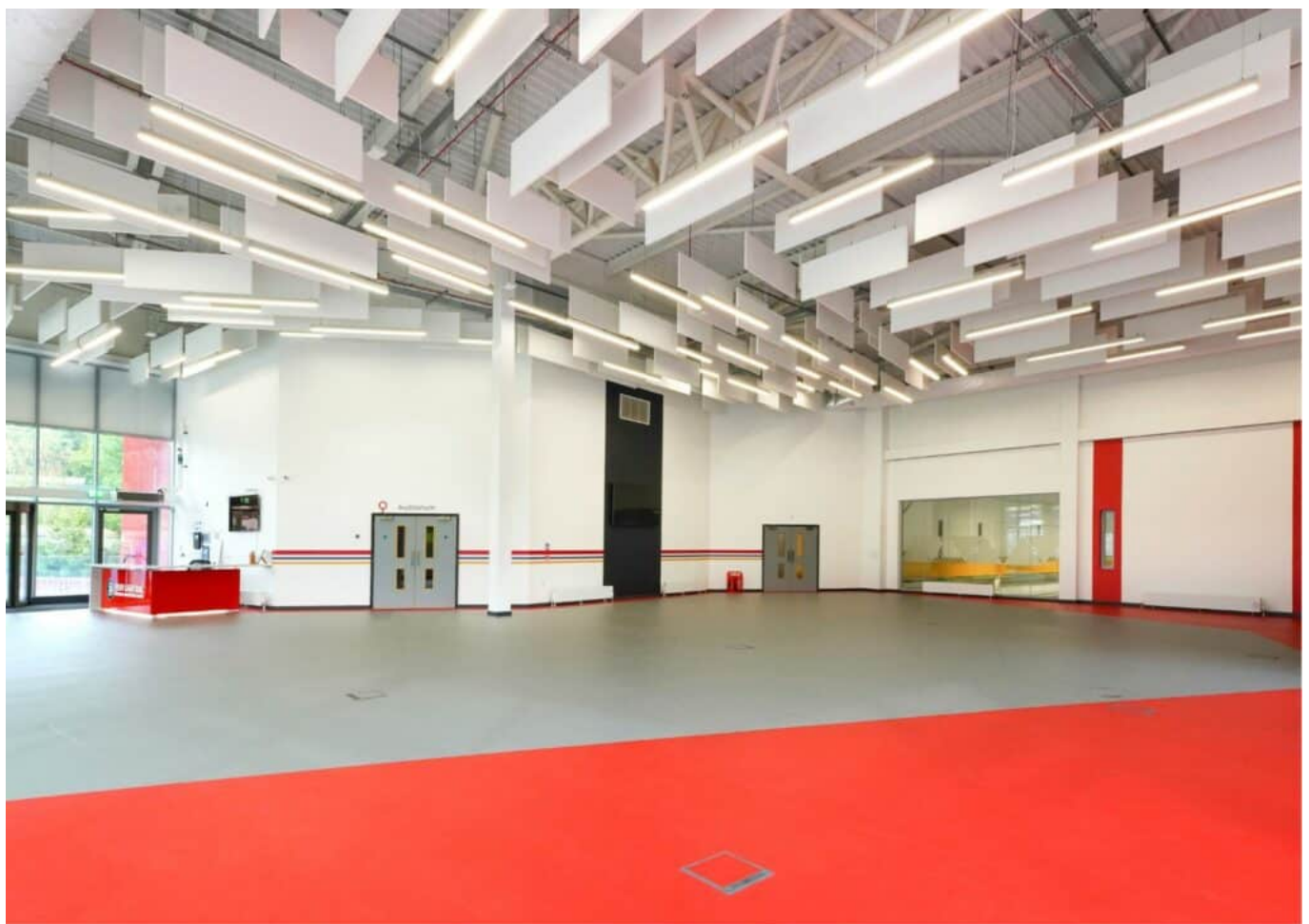
Key features include:

- Air conditioning, high-speed Wi-Fi and broadband
- The very latest in audio-visual technology
- Flexible room layouts, ideal for delivering multi-purpose day or evening events · Unique setting with

views overlooking the centre's [Rail Development and Test Site](#)

- Day Delegate Rates (DDRs) starting from £35 per person
- Selection of catering options\*
- Exclusive hire of the 2nd floor available\*
- Selection of optional extras\*

\*Additional charges may apply



The Meeting and Event Spaces can be used in isolation, as part of an exclusive hire arrangement, or in conjunction with the centre's Rail Development and Test Site to facilitate an organisation's innovation journey, supporting the development, testing, demonstration / training and commercialisation of new technologies from Technology Readiness Levels 6/7 all the way through to 9.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands and WMCA chair, visited the VLRNIC on Friday 26 October to view a [demonstration](#) of the pioneering [Coventry Very Light Rail \(CVLR\)](#) technology at the centre's unique Rail Development and Test Site.

Reflecting on his visit from the state-of-the-art 130-seater auditorium, the Mayor said:

"It's lovely to be back at the BCIMO again and to see how this wonderful new institution is progressing. We've seen the prototype of the Coventry Very Light Rail vehicle going around the test track and this is just one example of what can come out of this centre. With all the facilities coming together I'm full of optimism that this can become a critical part of innovative thinking across the Black Country and support our manufacturing sector. I'd like to thank everyone who's got it to this point."

Discussing the launch of the Meeting and Event Spaces, Neil Fulton, BCIMO's Chief Executive, said:

"Our new Meeting and Event Spaces here make us truly unique and able to offer so much more than a traditional rail test site. Our extensive range of facilities, when combined with our joined-up thinking, mean we can really help organisations in the industry accelerate their innovations to commercialisation."

Neil added:

"For those interested in using any of our facilities, we'd be delighted to get the ball rolling with an initial chat to determine your key areas of interest, followed by personalised tour of our facilities depending on your requirements and the support you need moving forward."

A number of notable industry events utilising the new spaces have already taken place including:

#### NETWORK RAIL – 20TH SEPTEMBER

This was the centre's first large-scale event with over 100 delegates, organised by the Railway Industry Association and titled 'Building Partnerships for Research and Innovation in Rail'. The event utilised the Auditorium for presentations and the Exhibition Hall for 20 exhibition stands, featuring the UKRRIN universities that Network Rail's Capital Delivery team aims to build better partnerships with.

#### UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM – 22ND SEPTEMBER

This event was hosted in the Auditorium for 50 Rail Masters students. The day was action-packed with presentations, team-building activities and trackside learning. The day utilised several Rail Development and Test Site facilities including the Rapid Charger, CVLR slab track and Tunnel to discuss drainage and vegetation management as well as the Rail Test Track itself to talk about switches functions, operations and potential issues.

#### NETWORK RAIL – 11TH OCTOBER

Network Rail's 'R&D Tunnels Demonstration event' saw 60 delegates visit the site for presentations in the Auditorium and the showcasing of four new technologies on the Rail Development and Test Site. The TSIR, ATE & Patch Repairs project demonstrations used sections of the 870m Tunnel and Rail Test Track.

#### NETWORK RAIL – 16TH TO 20TH OCTOBER

The 'FELIX Pilot Training Course & Demonstration Day' took place from the 16th to the 19th October. The event provided training in one of our smaller meeting rooms (Meeting Room 2.3) to the team to learn how to operate FELIX and provided practical experience on the Rail Test Track. The week culminated with a demonstration in the Auditorium.

#### PM TRAINING & ASSESSING – ONGOING

PM Training & Assessing are currently utilising the centre's meeting facilities for their training courses, bringing 15 to 25 students a session to the site, over the course of 2 to 5 days at a time. The courses are held in either Meeting Room 2.1, the venue's largest meeting room which accommodates a maximum of 35, or in the Auditorium.

CECA & WMCA – 24TH OCTOBER The Auditorium hosted The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) Midlands for a roundtable event with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

**\*\*New Year discounts available for member organisations\*\***

From January 2024, members of the BCIMO's supporting organisations, including the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Railway Industry Association (RIA), RBD Community, Rail Forum and UK Tram will receive an exclusive 10% discount on all meeting and event space bookings. Further details to be confirmed soon.

For more information on the facilities visit:

<https://bcimo.co.uk/hire-our-facilities/meeting-and-event-spaces/>

To make an enquiry please visit [www.bcimo/contact/contactus](http://www.bcimo/contact/contactus)