

Screen Australia invests over \$2 million in Australian Games Industry

Wednesday 4 September 2024: Screen Australia has announced over \$2 million in funding to boost the Australian games sector. This includes support for 12 games through the Games Production Fund, 27 games through the Emerging Gamemakers Fund and funding for three events through the Games Event Fund.

The Games Production Fund and Emerging Gamemakers Fund offer critical support to Australian independent gamemakers, aimed at providing funding for original games with budgets below \$500,000; and fostering new talent with professional development opportunities.

These initiatives are backed by the Federal Government's National Cultural Policy [Revive](#), which includes a commitment of \$12 million over four years from the 2023/24 financial year to Screen Australia's games funding.

Minister for the Arts **Tony Burke** said, "Video gaming has come a long way - now this global multi-billion-dollar industry offers a staggering variety of unique ideas and techniques for storytellers to connect audiences and explore their creativity. Our Government is committed to nurturing emerging talent in this booming field with \$12 million to press play on gamemakers' careers."

CEO of Screen Australia, **Deirdre Brennan** said, "This significant investment highlights our ongoing commitment to fostering growth and innovation within Australia's games industry. By supporting these projects and industry events, we're nurturing local developers and small to medium studios, reinforcing our position as a global leader in independent game-making."

"Demand for games funding is growing, with Screen Australia receiving over 370 applications, twice as many as the previous year. This reflects the increased role of targeted support for our local industry in an increasingly competitive landscape," said **Brennan**.

Since March 2022, Screen Australia has provided over \$12.5 million in tailored games funding programs, for projects including [Feed the Deep](#), [Diets and Deities](#) and [The Sacred Acorn](#). The agency supports games across a variety of platforms, such as PC, Mac, Linux, Nintendo Switch and iOS/Android, with games aimed at release on the App Store, Google Play, Steam, itch.io, Nintendo eShop and more.

The projects supported through the Games Production Fund include:

- **Cozy Commons (SA):** A life simulation game where players take on day-to-day activities as they discover the secrets of the town and the inhabitants who live there. Players can engage with the community, build their skills, search for collectables and decorate their home, all while discovering the rich world of stories from the characters they meet along the way. The team includes lead developer Tom Longo and lead artist Rebecca Hadland.
- **Doggy Don't Care (NSW):** In this comedic, adventure platformer, players unleash adorable chaos as a mischievous pup. By exploring, collecting and smashing their way around the house and beyond, players fetch the approval of their feathered friends - digging into a list of fun-filled tasks to earn mischievous badges. The team includes founder/creative director Rohan Nowell, graphic designer Carlo Delos Santos and composer/SFX artist Dominique Parker.
- **Frogreign (QLD):** In this story-driven platformer, players join frog prince Rill on an amphibious action-adventure to unravel a royal conspiracy. Using Rill's tongue as a grappling hook and other frog abilities to seamlessly leap, swing, dive and swim through a variety of locations and challenges. Players can explore the depths of the realm of Callidrya, filled with chaos and secrets. The team includes creative director Bryce Watson, designer Dallas Smart, writer Natasha Cox, lead developer Nico Plotz, composer Alejandro Perez Heinze and audio engineer Andres Buitrago.



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- **Jupiter Junkworks (VIC):** A fast-paced new take on the arcade puzzle genre featuring a narrative campaign mode where players rebuild a spaceship salvage yard. *Jupiter Junkworks* is from lead developer and producer Will Deragon, character illustrator and narrative designer Georgia Pedersen, composer Jam Nawaz (JAMATAR), sound designer Zander Hulme, 3D artist Paul Mahoney, animator Kiat-Boon Pierce and voice artist Audrey Willowbrook.
- **Zodiac Mountain (WA):** In this roguelike deck-building adventure game, players embark on a mystical journey as a determined Panda, seeking to prove their worth by challenging mythical creatures and the Chinese Zodiacs. The team includes CEO/MD/Founder Kevin Jiang, game designer/2D artist James Knight, 2D artists May Huang and Sylvia Lian, lead programmer Laurence Anthony Valentini, UI/UX designer Daisy Chan and sound designer Ian Chen.

The projects supported through the Emerging Gamemakers Fund include:

- **Aussie Rules (SA):** A sports party roguelite game fusing action-packed gameplay with absurd Aussie humour. Players can challenge friends to unpredictable matches driven by wild mechanics, all tied together by a retro aesthetic and surrealist satire based on Australian culture. The team includes producer David Ashby, developer Tyler Roach, writer and voice artist Broden Kelly and composer Dario Russo.
- **Feral Scape (NSW):** From developer Joseph Dowsett (BARCHboi), *Feral Scape* is an open-world fantasy RPG where player choices drive exploration, crafting, and game modding. Drawing inspiration from Australian locations, players engage in exploration and community-building within a fantasy setting in order to complete quests related to a wolf prophecy - aiming to unite different factions.
- **LunaGenesis (VIC):** An adventurous, experimental RPG where players take on the role of a young witch lost in a cursed city whose residents are trapped in their own nightmares. To escape, players navigate dream realms and uncover secrets about a shape-shifting antagonist. *LunaGenesis* is from creative director/programmer Michaela Vranic-Peters, programmer/producer Natasha Vranic-Peters and lead artist/AI programmer Nathan Semertzidis.
- **Project Backbone (ACT):** Follows the story of technomancer Zeke and alchemist Percy - two unlikely 'not boyfriends' working out their situationship. Players take on the role of Zeke as he and Percy traverse a tower that is growing out of the earth like a cancer - experiencing a combination of magic and technology and praying that their situationship stays strong the whole way through. *Project Backbone* is from creative director Alex Murphy and lead artist Hannah Levi.
- **Project Dairy Cat (VIC):** A deckbuilding tactics heist game set in a sci-fi future. Players take on the role of the infiltrator for a crew of space pirates who intercept and loot unmanned freighters. The team includes technical director Joel Davison, art director Sasha Mutch, composer Jess Cerro, audio engineer Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker and UI artist Olivia Ong.
- **The Troll and the Witch's House (SA):** This point and click puzzle mystery is from solo developer Ditte Wad Andersen. Players take on the character of a troll captured in a strange house. In the process of trying to escape, players piece together the fragments of the past, so the troll can slowly unravel the truth behind the house's tragedy - and in doing so, find the key to their escape.

For the full list of funded gamemakers and projects, please see the Games blocklines [here](#).

APPLICATIONS OPEN

Applications are currently open for the [Emerging Gamemakers Fund](#), [Games Production Fund](#), and [Games Event Fund](#). Before applying, applicants are encouraged to:

- read the guidelines;
- read the FAQs for the [Emerging Gamemakers Fund](#) and the [Games Production Fund](#) in depth;

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- engage with the [Emerging Gamemakers Fund](#) and the [Games Production Fund](#) Trends Reports;
- [watch the webinar](#) about Screen Australia games funding; and
- look at the types of other games Screen Australia is funding.

Applications are also open for the [Future Leaders Delegation](#), to support six early-to-mid career gamemakers with the opportunity to travel to the Game Developers Conference (GDC) in San Francisco from 17-21 March, 2025.

The Games Event Fund, [launched in April](#), has distributed over \$160,000 to [Play Now Melbourne](#), [Games Connect Asia Pacific \(GCAP\)](#) and [Freeplay Angles Festival](#). This fund is designed to amplify the visibility, networking and community-building opportunities for Australian gamemakers. To apply, [click here](#).

Screen Australia are also partnering with IGEA to deliver the Screen Australia Local Lounge at GCAP 2024. This will showcase 34 of Screen Australia's funded games and for the first time will feature a showcase of gender diverse-led games on Tuesday 8 October, in partnership with the [Gender Matters Task Force](#).

Any questions about these funds should be directed to games@screenaustralia.gov.au or Program Operations on 1800 507 901.

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