



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) HANDBOOK

version 1.5

<http://bit.ly/IGDA-SIG-Handbook>

SECTION 1: The IGDA, SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs), and VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

ABOUT THE IGDA

The International Game Developers Association (IGDA) is the world's largest membership association for game developers.

Our mission is to make game development a sustainable, fulfilling career for anyone with the desire to pursue it. We have Chapters on six continents and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) led by developers around the world, all dedicated to supporting game developers at every stage of their career.

From aspirational game developer to veteran, hobbyist to expert, we work to help game developers worldwide by advocating for the interests of game developers, promoting constant improvement of the craft of game development, and, most importantly, connecting our members with their peers. We work to empower every game developer to impact their career and the industry, and Chapters and SIGs are some of the most important resources available to IGDA members and the game development community at large.

The IGDA is a non-profit membership organization, registered as a 501(c)6 entity in the United States. Learn more about the IGDA at www.igda.org/about.

ABOUT IGDA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

IGDA special interest groups (SIGs) are virtual, global communities of the IGDA centered on a specific topic of interest relevant to game development - whether it is related to a discipline, a common interest, or a policy issue. SIGs connect developers around the world for the purpose of group learning, identification of challenges, advancing their focus in the industry, and networking. Each SIG is run by volunteer advocates of the organization. As a component of the international organization, each SIG shares and supports the overarching mission of the IGDA.

The IGDA has three types of special interest groups: affinity; advocacy; and resource communities. Each SIG type has its own benefits, guidelines, and requirements. While SIGs may contain elements of each category, a SIG will be grouped in a primary category for most effective support from IGDA HQ.

Types of SIGs

Affinity SIGs - Affinity SIGs, which include our groups focusing on building a more diverse and inclusive game development community, advocate for improving the industry, challenging the way their communities are represented within games, and providing a professional and social network to connect with peers of similar backgrounds or interests.

Affinity SIGs include: Allies; Blacks in Games; Devs With Kids; Jewish Game Developers; Latinx in Games; LGBTQ+; Muslims in Games; Students; Women in Games.

Advocacy SIGs - Advocacy SIGs take an active role in educating developers about specific issues that may impact their ability to have sustainable, fulfilling careers. Advocacy SIGs act as subject matter

experts on important topics relevant to the global game development community.

Advocacy SIGs include: Anti-Censorship and Social Issues; Developer Credit; Quality of Life.

Resource SIGs - Resource SIGs help developers further their understanding of, and expertise in, specific subjects. These SIGs routinely contribute resources such as books and whitepapers that are valued by the worldwide gamedev community.

Resource SIGs include Analog Games; Analytics; Business and Legal Issues; Community Management; Free and Open Source Software; Game Accessibility; Game Art; Game Design; Game Education; Game Writing; Game User Research; Human Resources; Indie Game Development; Learning, Education, and Games; Localization; Marketing; Production; Quality Assurance; Real Money Gaming; Romance and Sexuality; Serious Games; Unity; Virtual, Augmented, and Mixed Realities.

IGDA CODE OF ETHICS and ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

The IGDA requires that its members, Chapters, and Special Interest Groups adhere to its [Code of Ethics](#). The IGDA has also adopted a [zero-tolerance policy](#) towards all forms of harassment and violence. This position is expressed in the [IGDA Code of Ethics](#), and we are stating explicitly that, as part of this policy, harassment and/or violence of any kind, on the part of any IGDA Board member, Staff member, or volunteer leader, or at any IGDA-affiliated event, will not be tolerated.

As a member of our volunteer leadership team, you are expected to support this policy in the following ways:

- Adopt a Code of Conduct for any events, including virtual events and virtual spaces like Slack or Discord, you host.
 - The IGDA Leadership Summit adheres to this [Code of Conduct](#); any Code of Conduct adopted by a Chapter must comply with the elements of this Code of Conduct (explicitly stating that no form of harassment or assault will be tolerated) at a minimum.
 - IGDA Toronto has a great code of conduct available [here](#). You can see other examples in [GDC's code of conduct](#) and a general [Conference Code of Conduct](#) created by the Ada Initiative.
- Help your community understand how to create a friendly, welcoming environment. Commit to erring on the side of inclusivity.
- Ask for help if you encounter a difficult situation. If a member of your Chapter or SIG, or guest at your event, complains about harassment or assault, the worst possible response is to ignore the complaint.
 - IGDA HQ's process for addressing complaints of harassment may be found [here](#).
 - Additional guidelines on how to handle a complaint can be found [here](#) and [here](#). Of course you can always reach out to HQ for additional assistance. We've created an [#askhq](#) channel on Slack for general questions, and you can also contact the IGDA Executive Director, and members of the Board, through private messages on Slack or email.

Additionally, the IGDA expects its members, including all associated Chapters and Special Interest Groups, to adhere to its Inclusivity Policy and universally apply it to all of their communities, events, and interactions:

"We value inclusion and diversity as it makes us stronger, relevant and more successful. As a membership association, the IGDA represents and advocates on behalf of all individuals in the game industry. We fully support: equality in the workplace; cordial, respectful communications; safe social interactions; and an environment that reflects fairness and mutual respect throughout the industry."

BEFORE YOU START A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

An IGDA SIG ...

... is a **global community** of the IGDA. Run by volunteer advocates of the organization, a SIG serves all individuals -- from student to professional, indie to AAA -- interested in a specific game development topic, issue, resource, or affinity group.

... **spreads the IGDA's mission** and shares IGDA news and programs with its community.

... **supports a professional, inclusive, and supportive** game development community.

... **promotes and supports the reputation and brand** of the IGDA and the IGDA SIG in its community or area of expertise.

An IGDA SIG ...

... isn't used to solely benefit an individual person or company.

... isn't used to restrict knowledge or provide any person or company with a competitive advantage.

Before submitting a proposal for a new SIG, verify that a SIG focused on the affinity group, resource topic, or issue you'd like to pursue does not already exist and become familiar with the SIG Handbook. Consider the types of SIGs available and which may be the best fit for the goals of the potential new group.

Other things to consider when starting an IGDA Special Interest Group include:

- *Do I have contacts who would be interested in doing the legwork to establish and run the SIG with me?*
Each SIG requires a steering committee with at least 3 members: a Chair and Vice-Chair (or two Co-Chairs) and a Treasurer. The IGDA can help with connecting you to others who may be interested in helping with the leadership of a SIG.
- *What do I see as the role of the SIG?* Is the SIG an expert resource, a place for developers to network and connect with peers, or an advocate on a specific issue relevant to the game development community?
- *What would I like the SIG to accomplish in its first 6 months? First 12 months?* Do you want to create specific resources? What needs of the game development community aren't currently being met? What are the biggest opportunities to help the global game development community through the work of the SIG?

SIG BENEFITS AND EXPECTATIONS

IGDA Special Interest Groups are a powerful force in supporting sustainable, fulfilling careers for game developers around the world. The global IGDA organization recognizes the importance of SIGs through significant support programs, and also expects SIGs to act in the best interests of the game development community.

An official Special Interest Group of the IGDA:

- Is granted a limited, non-transferable, royalty-free license to use the IGDA brand. The IGDA affiliation can help your SIG with attracting members, fundraising, bringing in speakers for your events, and creating alliances with other organizations.
- Has access to the international IGDA community. Your SIG events and programs can be broadcast to IGDA members who choose to affiliate with your SIG, and can be promoted by other IGDA SIGs and Chapters around the world.
- Has access to IGDA HQ funding programs. As a matter of policy, IGDA only supports events that are run or hosted by officially-recognized IGDA Chapters or SIGs.
- Is provided with IGDA-branded and managed IT services, including a SIG email address, web hosting, social media accounts, etc.
- May be covered under the IGDA's insurance policies for events and liability. SIGs should contact HQ to learn more about what coverage is available for them.

The IGDA expects the following from its SIGs:

- SIG elections held at least every 2 years.
- Adherence to the [IGDA Code of Ethics](#), [Zero-Tolerance Harassment Policy](#), and [Social Media Policy](#).
- Promotion of the art and craft of game development, both conceptually and in practical learning for SIG participants.
- Promotion and support of global IGDA programs, Chapters, and Special Interest Groups.
- Timely updates to the IGDA staff about SIG leadership changes, SIG events, and other important SIG information.

SIG LEADER BENEFITS AND EXPECTATIONS

Volunteering as a member of the leadership team of an IGDA Special Interest Group represents a powerful opportunity to give back to the global game development community. By supporting game developers through your work, volunteer SIG Leaders gain important professional contacts, develop their managerial skills, and experience the emotional reward of contributing to a larger community and a greater good.

IGDA SIG Leaders are expected to meet the highest standards of professional conduct, including:

- Acting as Ambassadors of the IGDA in the following ways:
 - Maintain an IGDA membership for the duration of SIG leadership
 - Promote the IGDA and advocate for our programs, including but not limited to
 - Supporting SIG messages on social media
 - Connecting interested parties (volunteers, sponsors, affiliates) to HQ for involvement
 - Growing IGDA membership
 - Demonstrate the professionalism required of a public representative of the organization whenever representing the SIG

- Adhering to the [IGDA Code of Ethics](#), [Zero-Tolerance Harassment Policy](#), and [Social Media Policy](#).
- Commitment that the SIG Leadership will not use their role for personal gain. This prohibition includes using information or resources, including access to social media, gained from service as an IGDA volunteer leader to provide a business advantage that would otherwise not be obtained.
 - For clarity, this provision does not refer to any benefits gained by an individual's or organization's affiliation with the IGDA as a member, sponsor, or affiliate.

SECTION 2: STARTING AN IGDA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

STARTING A SIG

If you are interested in starting an IGDA SIG, you should be sure to consider the following questions:

- Is there a potential overlap in focus areas with an existing SIG? Are there opportunities to collaborate to maximize your impact?
- Who will form the leadership of the new SIG? You need at least three qualified people to begin the process of SIG formation; you may certainly have more volunteers if you prefer.
 - The governing body of a SIG is the Steering Committee. A SIG Steering Committee is made up of 3-9 individuals.
 - A SIG Steering Committee must have a Chair, Vice-Chair (or no more than 2 co-chairs) and Treasurer to adhere to IGDA Chapter & SIG Finance Guidelines.
 - Members of the SIG Steering Committee must:
 - Agree to abide by the expectations described in the **SIG LEADER BENEFITS AND EXPECTATIONS** section of the SIG handbook
 - Be an IGDA Member in good standing for at least six (6) months. (*This requirement may be waived at the IGDA HQ level by the Director of Global Chapter and SIG Operations or by the Executive Director.*)

STEPS FOR STARTING A NEW SIG

When you've answered the above questions, you're ready to begin the formal process of starting an IGDA SIG.

Email newsig@igda.org with the following information:

- Names, email addresses, membership information, and proposed titles for the SIG founders
- Proposed SIG name; see the SIG Branding, Logos, and Communication section for more information
- Description of the SIG, its goals, and how you will support your SIG's community

This information will be reviewed by IGDA Staff; they may ask for additional information, or suggest new or alternate goals for your SIG. Once the initial application has been reviewed, a conference call will be scheduled with the SIG founders and Director of Chapter and SIG Development (DirCSD). During that call, the SIG founders will have the opportunity to ask questions about SIG management and support, and the DirCSD will review SIG support and funding programs and other important information.

The DirCSD will then begin the formal SIG onboarding process, which involves the following:

- Signature of a SIG Charter Agreement by all SIG leaders
- Creation of the SIG IT assets, including email alias, Twitter account, Facebook account, and web address
- SIG creation announcement

SECTION 3: SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP BRANDING, LOGOS, and COMMUNICATION

SIG BRANDING

Following the IGDA's official brand and position is important. A consistent application of our brand -- including messaging, imagery and logo -- is necessary to eliminate confusion and build upon our successes as an organization, including yours as an IGDA SIG.

As we are an organization for international game developers, we want our members (and potential members) to recognize us globally. To build and maintain our brand, we work to deliver a consistent experience that welcomes, empowers, and supports game developers around the world. For example, if one of our members joins a new SIG, their new community should look and feel familiar, comfortable, and welcoming.

SIG LOGOS

The IGDA recognizes the value of a strong community, and we encourage all IGDA SIGs to develop a logo that reflects their unique identity, interests, or goals. At the same time, to maintain consistency of IGDA branding and representation, your SIG logo and name must adhere to the following requirements, and must be approved by IGDA HQ before being used publicly. For logo approval, please email staff@igda.org and allow at least 5 business days for feedback.

Many established SIGs have logos in use which do not conform to the new brand guidelines. At this time, those SIGs do not need to replace their current logos, but any logo redesign must conform to the guidelines below.

- SIG logos must include the IGDA vortex.
 - The IGDA vortex may not be stretched, cut, or altered in any way.
 - The IGDA vortex must appear in IGDA yellow (FBD700)/red (D71215) or in black, white, or grey, in accordance with [brand guidelines](#).
 - SIGs may not use the old "shaded" red/yellow vortex.
- SIG logos must adhere to the IGDA branding guidelines, available for reference [here](#).
- SIG logos must not include any reference to game characters, trademarked buildings, monuments, or other intellectual property without written permission of the trademark owner. If a SIG has questions about the legality of their proposed logo, they are strongly advised to consult HQ for legal advice.
 - Please note that some specific buildings around the world are trademarked, and their trademark owners may vigorously defend the trademark.
 - Please note that there are a number of restrictions around the use of certain flags in logos, and that these laws vary considerably from country to country.
- SIG logos must include the SIG name, presented as igda SIG, displayed in Museo 500. For example: igda Localization SIG.
- SIG logos must not include imagery that encourages violence, discrimination, or hate. SIG logos should avoid religious imagery unless the SIG is aligned with a specific religious community, and should support a diverse, tolerant, and inclusive spirit.
- Outside of these requirements, we strongly encourage SIGs to develop logos that reflect their profession, and/or community. As a global organization, logos help foster SIG spirit and encourage both individual identity and participation as a part of a much larger organization.

SIG NAMING CONVENTIONS

All SIGs must use clear, consistent, and pre-approved names. During the SIG formation process, volunteer leaders should propose a SIG name to IGDA HQ, who will flag any potential concerns or possible confusion.

When a SIG name has been approved, name variations are not allowed. Abbreviations may only be used on the SQUARE SIG logo should the name be too long to fit on the provided template.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SIG COMMUNICATIONS

To avoid confusion, SIGs should clearly identify their activities or communications as being associated with a specific SIG. Additionally, communications from SIGs should be clearly differentiated from communications from IGDA HQ.

- SIG activities should be clearly identified and promoted as such.
- SIGs should not use the general IGDA logo without permission, or represent that they are speaking for the larger IGDA organization except when linking to an HQ article, resource, or message.
- SIG leaders are NOT authorized to speak for the IGDA, and should not represent that they do so under any circumstances.

SECTION 4: SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP GOVERNANCE

For the benefit of IGDA members around the world, and to ensure the best possible member experience, all IGDA Special Interest Groups must meet specific requirements for their governance.

SIG ELECTIONS AND LEADERSHIP

THE IGDA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP STEERING COMMITTEE

All SIGs must have a Steering Committee. The SIG Steering Committee is elected by IGDA members affiliated with the specific SIG and is responsible for overseeing a SIG, or, for new SIGs, is composed of volunteers who are involved in the formation of the SIG and its initial strategic direction and work.

All SIG Steering Committees must have one Chair and one Vice-Chair (or two Co-Chairs) and a Treasurer. The Chair and Vice Chair (or the two Co-Chairs) are the primary points of contact with IGDA HQ about official SIG business, and are ultimately accountable for the SIG.

Disbursements under US\$250 require approval by the Chair, Vice (or Co-) Chair, or Treasurer of the IGDA SIG's Steering Committee as identified by IGDA HQ's Leadership Roster. Please note that each IGDA SIG is responsible for updating HQ with its leadership roster, and delays in doing so may result in delays making funds available; to update the Leadership Roster, contact the Director of Chapter and SIG Development at ChapSIGDev@igda.org.

Disbursements from US\$250-\$999 require at least two of the Chair, Vice (or Co-) Chair, or Treasurer of the IGDA SIG's Steering Committee to approve the request, as well as approval from the Director of Chapter and SIG Development.

Disbursements of US\$1,000 and above require at least two of the Chair, Vice (or Co-) Chair, or Treasurer of the IGDA SIG's Steering Committee to approve the request, in addition to the approval of the IGDA Executive Director or IGDA Treasurer.

IGDA HQ strongly recommends that steering committees have an odd number of participants to avoid voting ties.

HQ-recognized steering committee titles are provided below:

- Chair
- Co-Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Steering Committee Member

IGDA SIG ELECTIONS

Fundamentally, SIGs exist for the good of the IGDA Membership and the game development community. Therefore, SIGs are required to hold elections at least every two years. Elections allow IGDA members to have

a voice in their SIG's leadership. Being elected (or re-elected) by your IGDA peers affirms that the community believes in your impact and leadership and in the steering committee's direction of the SIG.

However, SIGs may not want to risk turning over their entire leadership team each year. An option to address this concern is to have multi-year steering committee terms, and to rotate the seats that are up for election.

- Example: 3-member steering committee
 - SIG leadership has 2-year terms.
 - Year 1: Seats 1 and 2 up for election
 - Year 2: Seat 3 up for election
 - SIG leadership has 3-year terms.
 - Year 1: Seat 1 up for election
 - Year 2: Seat 2 up for election
 - Year 3: Seat 3 up for election
- Example: 5-member steering committee
 - SIG leadership has 2-year terms.
 - Year 1: Seats 1 and 2 up for election
 - Year 2: Seats 3, 4, and 5 up for election
 - SIG leadership has 3-year terms.
 - Year 1: Seats 1 and 2 up for election
 - Year 2: Seats 3 and 4 up for election
 - Year 3: Seat 5 up for election
- Example: 7-member steering committee
 - SIG leadership has 2-year terms.
 - Year 1: Seats 1, 2, and 3 up for election
 - Year 2: Seats 4, 5, 6, and 7 up for election
 - SIG leadership has 3-year terms.
 - Year 1: Seats 1 and 2 up for election
 - Year 2: Seats 3 and 4 up for election
 - Year 3: Seats 5, 6, and 7 up for election

The IGDA strongly recommends that elections be held for steering committee membership, with the committee meeting as soon as possible after new member terms begin to determine who shall hold the various officer positions.

Please note that when a new SIG is formed, the Steering Committee is made up of volunteers involved with the formation of the SIG who express interest in serving on the Steering Committee. Elections should be held within 18 months of the SIG's formation.

OTHER SIG TEAMS

Some SIGs may find they need additional support from their community; in addition to volunteers, two organizational options for formalizing that community support include Task Forces and Advisory Boards.

A SIG Task Force is a temporary group created for a set period of time to tackle a specific and/or time-sensitive project. A SIG Task Force is assembled by a SIG's Steering Committee for a specific purpose (for example, handling the planning and execution of an annual event). Task force members are encouraged to

be IGDA members, but it is not a requirement.

Many SIGs also find it useful to assemble a **SIG Advisory Board** who can help guide the SIG's Steering Committee on trends in the industry, provide connections with potential contributors, advise on best practices, and provide other helpful insight. A SIG Advisory Board is appointed by the SIG Steering Committee, has no authority over a SIG or the SIG's leadership, and has no official say or voting privileges on SIG matters (except to vote on SIG leadership as an IGDA member if they meet IGDA voting criteria). SIG Advisory Boards are optional and a SIG is not required to have one. Advisory board members are encouraged to be IGDA members, but it is not a requirement for their participation and in fact, SIGs may choose to appoint individuals from similar but unrelated fields or professions (ie: music, film, IT, etc) in order to bring outside perspective to the group..

SIG Volunteers are individuals who may be assisting with day-to-day SIG matters such as social media postings, developing content for the website, or moderating the online community but do not sit on the Steering Committee or have any formal authority in the SIG. Volunteers are optional, but may be very helpful depending on the activities and priorities of a SIG. Volunteers are encouraged to be IGDA members, but it is not a requirement.

SECTION 5: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT and RESOURCES

IGDA Chapters and Special Interest Groups are one of the most powerful ways the organization supports the global game development community. IGDA HQ, including staff and the IGDA Board of Directors, have designated Chapter and SIG support as one of the organization's highest priorities, and have introduced a number of new programs to help IGDA SIGs make a bigger impact for their communities.

In addition to easing the burden of volunteer leadership by providing the support and resources described below, IGDA HQ also endeavors to ensure SIG viability and continuity, making it easy to transition to new volunteer leadership as needed. By having IGDA HQ manage the tasks described below, the vital information for a SIG is available in a single, secure repository, ensuring that SIG leadership always has access to the resources of a SIG.

TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

The IGDA provides its SIGs with a number of IT resources, with the goal of making it easier for volunteer leaders to manage the SIG, maintain privacy with their personal identification, and transition SIG management to new members of the leadership team. IT support provided by HQ includes the following:

- An @igda.org email address used as an alias forwarding to designated volunteers
- Access to IGDA SIG-branded social media. To ensure continuity and appropriate access to social media accounts, the IGDA requires that these social media accounts be established and administered by HQ, with access granted to the SIG volunteer(s) designated by the SIG chair.
 - Facebook page and Group
 - Twitter
 - Discord server
- An optional discussion and/or announcement list on the IGDA domain
- Optional access to a lower Eventbrite processing fee under the IGDA's master account
- A SIG-specific page in igda.org
- Invitation to participate in the IGDA Volunteer Leader Slack, which includes leaders from the IGDA Chapters and SIGs around the world as well as IGDA HQ Staff and Board members.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

The IGDA HQ team provides significant operational support to its SIGs, including but not limited to the following areas of assistance. Please contact IGDA HQ for specific information about the following benefits and your SIG's situation.

- IGDA HQ can provide assistance with legal issues a SIG may be experiencing. (Please note, however, that this assistance is for IGDA SIG issues only, not for issues encountered by an individual member or company.)
- Depending on the SIG, the event, and the location(s) involved, SIGs may be covered by the IGDA's event and liability insurance policies.
- All IGDA SIGs are considered by the US Internal Revenue Service to be special programs of the IGDA, and to share their 501(c)6 tax status. Please note that SIGs may not apply for their own Employer Tax

Identification (EIN) number because of the IRS' regulations; doing so jeopardizes the legal and tax status of HQ and the SIG. The IGDA files US tax returns annually and conducts audits at least every three years, in accordance with US IRS requirements.

- The IGDA provides banking services to its SIGs where permissible by law.
 - IGDA Chapter and SIG funds are held in a separate account, administered by the IGDA's Association Management Company. These funds are NOT mingled with the IGDA's operational funds.
 - All grants made by IGDA HQ to a SIG are deposited into the SIG account. Additionally, a SIG can deposit funds in this account by check, wire transfer, ACH transfer, or PayPal. Other accommodations may be discussed upon request.
 - An IGDA SIG Chair, Co-Chair, or Treasure may request their balance information or a disbursement by emailing accounting@igda.org. The turnaround time for these requests is two business days (once all required documentation is submitted).
 - Disbursements under US\$250 require approval by the Chair, Vice (or Co-) Chair, or Treasurer of the IGDA SIG's steering committee as identified by IGDA HQ's Leadership Roster. Please note that each IGDA SIG is responsible for updating HQ with its leadership roster, and delays in doing so may result in delays making funds available; to update the Leadership Roster, contact the Director of Chapter and SIG Development at ChapSIGDev@igda.org.
 - Disbursements from US\$250-\$999 require at least two of the Chair, Vice (or Co-) Chair, or Treasurer of the IGDA SIG's steering committee to approve the request, as well as approval from the Director of Chapter and SIG Development.
 - Disbursements of US\$1,000 and above require at least two of the Chair, Vice (or Co-) Chair, or Treasurer of the IGDA SIG's steering committee Board to approve the request, in addition to the approval of the IGDA Executive Director or IGDA Treasurer.
 - Where possible, disbursements are made by Paypal to minimize processing fees. Other methods of payment are available upon request; however, the SIG may be asked to cover payment fees.
 - In accordance with US IRS regulations, additional documentation (such as a W-8 or W-9) may be required for processing disbursements. In general, these forms are required when paying someone for work performed or when providing a grant, not when reimbursing actual expenses.
 - IGDA SIGs are required to adopt a reasonable expense policy, ensuring that the SIG funds are spent in a way that supports the good of the game development community. Please contact IGDA HQ for a sample expense policy.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Our SIGs are one of the most important ways the IGDA supports game developers around the world in pursuing sustainable, fulfilling careers. One of the IGDA's biggest initiatives in 2018 is to increase the support we provide to Chapters and SIGs, through helping you make valuable connections in the IGDA Volunteer Leader community, assisting with the logistics of leading a chapter or SIG, and especially in providing direct financial support for Chapter and SIG initiatives.

We've introduced three new programs designed to provide additional funding to Chapters and SIGs and also to recognize exceptional work being done by Chapters and SIGs of all sizes to help support the global game development community.

Growth Bonus Program

Chapters and SIGs can be the IGDA's best advocates in bringing new Studio Affiliates, Partner Affiliates, and HQ Sponsors. The Growth Bonus Program provides a direct incentive for supporting the IGDA's growth through studio affiliation, partner affiliation, and sponsorship.

- Gives 10% of the value of any new Studio Affiliate, Partner Affiliate, or HQ Sponsor back to the Chapter or SIG that made the introduction to the affiliate or sponsor.
- Available only for new affiliates or sponsors; "new" is defined as an organization that has not been affiliated with the IGDA, or been an IGDA sponsor, in the past three years.
- The individual who makes the introduction decides which chapter(s)/SIG(s) receives the funds provided through the Growth Bonus Program.
- Funds are made available to the Chapter/SIG within three business days after the payment from the new affiliate/sponsor is received by HQ.
- There is no limit to the amount of money a Chapter or SIG may receive through the Growth Bonus program.
- Information about the IGDA Studio Affiliate program, which allows companies to buy IGDA memberships for its developers in addition to providing significant additional benefits, the IGDA Partner Affiliate program, which helps companies that support game developers through products or services, and the IGDA's sponsorship opportunities at GDC can be found [here](#).

Membership Bonus Program

When a member joins the IGDA, they are able to select a primary and unlimited secondary SIGs. The membership bonus program helps provide Chapters and SIGs with money based on the number of members that actively engage with their programs.

- Grant amounts are determined by number of paid individual members who have a Chapter or SIG as their primary affiliate designation.
- Grants are paid twice yearly, in early January and early July, based on member data as of June 30 and December 31. Grants are paid in the following amounts, by deposits to the Chapter's IGDA-held bank account:
 - 25-75 affiliated members: US\$150
 - 76-150 affiliated members: US\$250
 - 151+ affiliated members: US\$500
- Grants may be spent at the SIG's discretion, so long as the funds are used in ways that are consistent with the IGDA's Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Zero-Tolerance Harassment policies.

Impact Grant Program

In addition to providing funds based on membership, the IGDA recognizes that many Chapters and SIGs, especially those in emerging markets, undertake programs or initiatives that provide significant benefits to game developers around the world. The Impact Grant Program provides financial support through grants made to Chapters or SIGs, based on the impact of their work.

- Impact Grants support work that contributes to sustainable, fulfilling careers for game developers around the world. Impact Grant awards are strongly biased towards projects or events that provide resources or benefits at a large scale.
 - Examples of projects that would be good contenders for impact grants include funds to support

an editor and graphic designer for a white paper on an industry issue, software licensing funds for an online mentorship program, or funds to cover costs to record talks given at Chapter meetings.

- Examples of projects that would not be good options for impact grants include funds to send an individual to a conference or to hold a social gathering.
- Impact Grants are awarded by the IGDA Executive Director, up to US\$5,000.
- A Chapter or SIG may not receive more than US\$5,000 per year in Impact Grants.
- Grants will reimburse, or directly pay, actual and specific expenses, not provide money to be used for general activities.
- To be considered for an Impact Grant, the Chapter or SIG must submit an application that includes the following information:
 - Purpose of the grant
 - Grant impact
 - Timing of activity to be supported by the grant
- Activities or projects supported by the Impact Grant must be done by an official IGDA Chapter or SIG, and the IGDA must receive public credit for their support provided through the Impact Grant.

We strongly encourage Chapters and SIGs to take advantage of these programs. In addition to these programs, other funding opportunities will be offered from time to time.

PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Through its various communication and social media channels, the IGDA reaches over 30,000 game developers around the globe. The IGDA and its Chapters reinforce and cross-promote the activities of other IGDA organizations across the globe.

To have your Chapter's event or initiative promoted by IGDA HQ, email the Director of Chapter and SIG Development with the relevant information, as far in advance as possible. Additionally, post the relevant details in the **#promotethis** channel of the IGDA Volunteer Leader slack.

SECTION 6: SIG EVENTS, OUTPUT, AND ACTIVITIES

There are dozens of ways your SIG can support awareness of your focus, and help other game developers around the world learn more about and engage with your topic. Below are numerous examples, but this information is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

WHITE PAPERS

White papers, authoritative reports on a specific subject, are invaluable resources to the game development community. Many IGDA SIGs have created White Papers that are commonly referenced today.

A good white paper should include data and analysis, be professional and fact-based, provide sourcing information where appropriate, and emphasize the value of the information to the game development community. SIG white papers should also provide information on how to engage with the SIG.

You can find collected SIG white papers in the [IGDA Resources](#) page.

DISCUSSION GROUPS

SIGs may maintain discussion groups as part of their social media presence, or as an additional activity of their SIG. IGDA HQ will facilitate the establishment of IT resources to support the discussion groups as needed.

Discussion groups are particularly valuable for SIGs in a space where there's rapid evolution, or where resources may not yet exist. Discussion groups help community members explore relevant topics in an accessible way, and can be used as the basis for future work like white papers or in-person events.

Discussion groups must adhere to the IGDA Code of Conduct, and may wish to establish additional guidelines for participation in the group. Moderators of the group should also agree, in advance, on expected behaviors from the participants and on how they will enforce those behaviors.

A sample policy for a discussion group (based on a [Women in Gaming/Tech group](#) hosted on Facebook) is pasted below; you may wish to moderate the tone to fit the personality and objectives of your SIG:

<Clarify the purpose of the group and who is welcome to participate> This group discusses issues relating to women in games and technology. We're open to all who wish to participate - gamers, industry professionals, commentators, etc. Just request to join.

Dissenting opinions welcome; trolls are not.

====General Rules====

==Stay on Topic== <What topics are permissible for discussion? Can people post about off-topic things? If so, what etiquette should they use?

This group is about women in gaming & tech. While there are plenty of awesome, more generalized groups on feminism out there, please try to keep this one on topic.

==Be Excellent to Each Other==

Dissenting opinions are great, as long as it doesn't become personal. Keep the conversation objective and free from personal attacks. If we see anyone resorting to attacking another member we'll have to step in with the mod boots on, and then everyone is sad.

Don't do that.

==No Screencaps== Clarify what expectations, if any, the group has of privacy and confidentiality
This group is set to Closed so that its members may have discussions in a safe space. Any member found to be posting screencaps of conversation out to a larger audience will be banned.

==No Spamming==

Posting about your new game, software project, etc is alright, as long as you provide additional context and do not spam the group. No-context posts, duplicate posts, or otherwise irrelevant posts will be deleted without warning.

==No Impersonating==

If it is discovered that you are impersonating another member, you will be banned permanently. Don't do that, it's not cool.

==Nothing Illegal==

This one is pretty simple: If it's illegal, don't do or talk about it here.

==Respect the Privacy of Others== Clarify any expectations people should have about non-group interactions

Connecting with other people through the group is awesome! However, not everyone is going to be comfortable accepting friend requests from people they don't know in real life. Try not to take it personally, and respect the privacy of the other participants.

==Have an issue or question? Message the mods!=

While we're not always able to get back to messages right away, the moderators are very active and will address concerns as soon as we're able.

==The mods are currently==

<name>

<name>

Blocking the mods will result in your immediate dismissal from the group.

EVENTS

SIGs may run virtual or in-person events, including panels, Summits, webinars, or conferences. For example, the [GRUX SIG](#) runs multiple conferences over the course of the year.

SIGs may also run virtual events, including [AMAs](#), webinars, and panels.

Keep in mind that physical conferences can be very expensive and time-consuming; we recommend consulting with IGDA HQ and other SIGs to better understand the budget and level of effort involved. Some SIGs hold events adjacent to, or in partnership with, larger conferences, and IGDA HQ would be happy to help facilitate those discussions where possible.

OTHER RESOURCES

Your community may have many other questions and needs; don't hesitate to create resources that are helpful to them! For example, a list of relevant conferences that aren't directly associated with game development may be helpful, as would investors with interest in specific types of content.

If you're not sure whether a resource would be helpful, think about the number of questions you typically hear about the topic; if you've received more than two of the same question, odds are people want to know more!

OTHER PROGRAMS

SIGs may also develop other programs; for example, a SIG may launch a mentoring program to better support its members. The Allies SIG created an Allies Workshop based on the work done by the Ada Initiative, but tailored for game development. As the experts on your communities, we encourage you to think creatively about how to help game developers and share information about your focus. If you have any questions, or would like feedback on a new idea, please don't hesitate to contact IGDA HQ.

VOLUNTEERS

Many people are interested in supporting the work of a SIG, but may have questions about what volunteering with, or participating in, the SIG entails. We've provided an email template for your use below when answering questions about how someone can participate in a SIG.

Dear <NAME>,

Thanks so much for your interest in the <SIG NAME> SIG! As far as what's involved, the short answer is it depends. There are many ways to get involved in a SIG, and I'll give you an overview below:

- SIG Steering Committee member: You help set the strategy of the SIG and manage the interactions with HQ, the SIG volunteers, and SIG community. You may take on administrative work (approving SIG expenses, approving members in a FB group, managing social media accounts). You may also lead a roundtable at GDC, although this varies by SIG and the individual involved. We ask that each SIG have at least three members of the Steering Committee, but some SIGs have (many) more.
 - The level of effort/time involved with this role also varies. For example, the Student SIG hosts a Discord server, regular AMA with experienced developers, and frequent social media posts, so the time involved is significant. For other SIGs, like Devs with Kids, it's primarily a social SIG, and the interaction is on a calm, easy-to-moderate FB group.
- Active SIG volunteer/Project participant: You support the SIG, through active participation in the community (usually on Slack, Discord, FB, or other platform) and/or through volunteering on a specific project.
 - Again, the time commitment varies a bit based on the SIG and project. If you volunteer to write a section of a white paper, you'll make a more concentrated time commitment than if you check in on a Slack every few days.
 - <Information about your SIG's current projects or interactions here; see the example below> The Games For Health SIG is in the process of discussing its projects for the next 12 months, but some ideas that have been mentioned include:
 - Informing game developers (both rank and file, and studio heads/CEOs looking to expand their base) of the myriad opportunities and advantages of making games related to health and healthcare, including: helping

- people directly; interesting new challenges; huge financial possibilities; connecting to the health industry that has a MUCH more gender/age/race balanced composition than the game industry.
- Building an open, evolving list of resources, including such things as links to research about game/health overlap, success stories about existing successes, conferences that cross over (there are dozens, if not hundreds, around the world), articles and books that can help people get up to speed, and so on.
- Setting up ways to reach out to health care providers, investors, etc. and inform them about the game industry and possible partnerships (as little as game developers know about the health industry, they know less about us!)
- Research priorities discussed publicly and with "matchmaking" of researchers/students/companies - there are enormous possibilities in both directions, creating game-based solutions (lots of interest in VR/AR too) to address medical issues, as well as medical research into things that affect the games industry (the research putting the lie to the 'games cause violence' myth, research into reducing VR sickness, exploring issues of hard data on effects of games on children, etc.
- Casual SIG participant: Check in infrequently, act as a specific Subject Matter Expert on something, support the SIG through social media shares, etc. <Include information about and links to existing SIG groups or sites here.>

It's also not unusual to have someone's participation ebb and flow as their available time changes, but we do ask that if you take on a role in the SIG leadership, you make a commitment to the SIG for at least a year, and if you take on a role in a special project, you honor that commitment as well.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have!

Best,

<YOUR NAME>