



## National Cultural Policy Submission

IGDA Melbourne is one of the **largest communities of game developers** and creators in Australia, with over 2,500 subscribers on our mailing list, and our monthly meetups regularly exceed 200 game developers in attendance.

IGDA Melbourne is a volunteer-driven, non-profit organisation **established in 2009** and provides resources, events and programs to support Australian game developers to bring Australian games and stories to global markets.

We run a wide range of events and programs to support the game development community in Victoria, including:

- **Melbourne Global Game Jam**, which brings together industry and emerging talent to experiment and create new games over a weekend in January. Teams formed at Melbourne Global Game Jam have gone on to create game development studios lasting a decade, publishing Australian games globally, and employing local talent.
- **Monthly Meetups**, which provide game developers an opportunity to network, showcase games they are working on, and learn from industry experts with monthly talks.
- **Megadev**, which connects local and interstate developers with international visitors at the industry closing night event of Melbourne International Games Week. Megadev has seen attendance exceed 700, with representatives from international publishers attending.
- **International Games Exchange**, with our partner chapters in Shenzhen (China), Japan and Singapore, brings Victorian games to developer communities in these regions to assist with localisation and translation testing. Through our partnership with IGDA Shenzhen, New South Wales game 'Castillon' by One Up Plus will be exhibited at the China ICIF in May, with attendance expected to exceed 200,000.

We run all of our programs with **zero** funding from the state and federal governments, because there is **no dedicated organisational funding program for games sector support organisations in Australia.**

The lack of organisational funding for the games sector in Australia severely limits our ability to address resource gaps for the industry, when addressing those resource gaps would require significant funding, and means that support organisations for the games sector largely depend on the unpaid labor of volunteers.

## The lack of games-specific organisational funding hinders our ability to support Australian game developers in bringing Australian interactive stories to the world stage.

We applied to the ASEAN-Australia Centre’s 2026-2027 grants program to bring delegates from Southeast Asia to Melbourne International Games Week 2026, to connect Australian developers with publishers and localisation teams that can help bring their games to Southeast Asia, a \$14.84 billion market that is currently under-utilized by Australian game developers. This program would also have seen Australian games exhibited at Gamescom Asia in 2027 to bring localised Australian games to the largest games exhibition in Southeast Asia.

Our application was not successful because the funding program was not games-specific and our application had to compete with non-screen industries in a highly competitive round. As a consequence, the \$14.84 billion Southeast Asia games market will remain difficult to access for Australian developers, and **Australian stories will have little to no coordinated presence at Gamescom Asia.**

Another example is demonstrated through Freeplay’s application to Creative Victoria’s Creative Enterprises fund for 2026-2029. Of the 81 arts organisations supported by Creative Enterprises, **zero** are games/interactive arts organisations.

## Games is the only creative sector in Australia with no organisational funding.

Despite generating 65% of film and television’s sales, and an employment size of 10% of the film and television production industry, games receive only 3% of the funding film and video production gets. Games sector support organisations receive even less, with almost no funding over the past few years through listed programs and partnerships.

Federal or State Agency	Funding received by sector support organisations for all other creative industries, including film, television, theatre, writing and music through listed programs	Funding received by games sector support organisations through listed programs
<b>ORGANISATIONAL FUNDING</b>		
Creative Victoria (26-29) <sup>[1]</sup>	\$16,100,000	\$0
Creative Australia (24-25) <sup>[2]</sup>	\$204,763,000	\$0
<b>SHORT-TERM EVENT AND FESTIVAL FUNDING</b>		
VicScreen (23-24) <sup>[3]</sup>	\$4,369,182	\$31,600
Screen Australia (24-25) <sup>[4]</sup>	\$1,421,000	\$236,168

[1] [Creative Enterprises Program recipients 2026-29](#) [2] [Creative Australia Annual Report 2024-25](#) [3] [VicScreen disclosure of payments 2023-24](#) [4] [Screen Australia Annual Report 2024-25](#)

## Australian games have no representation on the boards of federal agencies.

Neither Creative Australia nor Screen Australia have **any** board members with direct experience in games.

Indeed, of the **expert panels reviewing this submission** for the next National Cultural Policy, **none of the expert panels have lived experience or background in games**. The fine arts, film & television, theatre & acting, comedy, dance, music, literature and academia are all represented in the expert panels and policy advisory group. Games have no-one.

**The Australian games sector is not even represented in the National Cultural Policy panels to which we must advocate.**

It is time to *level the playing field for Australian games*, with the establishment of Games Australia as a new national agency.

Other creative sectors in Australia are supported by organisations such as Creative Australia, Music Australia, Writers Australia and Screen Australia.

It is time for the federal government to **establish Games Australia**, a dedicated national agency to support games and interactive arts in Australia, and to provide funding to the local organisations that support the games sector through resources, events and programs.

This national agency must:

- Have a board on which all members of the board have lived experience in games, so that the agency can effectively advocate for and support Australian games
- Invest in games and interactive arts projects at the federal level, including non-digital games, and support the establishment of domestic games publishers
- Annually fund local and national games sector support organisations with funding that is not event-based, to enable support organisations to afford the cost of staffing so that organisations are not entirely reliant on volunteer, unpaid labor
- Seek regular input from games creatives and games organisations in Australia to inform the programs and funding available to the sector

The Australian games sector is deserving of the same funding and support as other creative sectors in Australia. If the federal government wants to see interactive Australian stories thrive on the world stage, it **must establish Games Australia: a dedicated national agency to achieve this goal.**