INTERACTIVE GAMES FUND CONSULTATION: FEEDBACK FROM THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPER COMMUNITY

These notes have been collated from phone conversations between WA developers and Screen Australia's Mike Cowap and Tim Phillips during January 2013. They reflect points made by individuals, rather than a consensus.

Remember you can still make your voice heard via the online discussion board, or an email submission to gamesfund@screenaustralia.gov.au. Comments close 25 January 2013.

Notes from the public forums held in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane, and a recording of the webinar are available here: www.screenaustralia.gov.au/gamesconsult

Key points raised

- Support peak industry events and activity (such as Global Game Jam & incubators) for the purposes of professional development and culture building. Incubators anchor communities and give them an infrastructure.

- Marketing is critical to the success of any game.

- Pre-existing games with the potential for growth should be eligible to apply for production funds.

- Completed games should be able to access a release fund.

- New versions of games for new platforms should be eligible to apply.

- Ensure the guidelines are clear about experience eligibility.

- Definition of 'shipped title' (for the purposes of eligibility) should be broad and non-judgemental, taking into account scope, turnover, market reach, etc.

- IP is not necessarily the be all and end all. Other activity can be equally financially advantageous, such as income from porting other games.

- Special production initiatives with strategic partners,eg Microsoft, would provide a great opportunity for professional development for less experienced developers.

- Eligibility for production fund set at right level.

- Application materials for production fund should include an EPOC that demonstrates the core game mechanic, even if just in rudimentary form.

- Ask for playable prototypes as a requirement to apply for the production fund. Must show the mechanics: is it entertaining and does it make sense? Doesn't need to be a full vertical slice.

- Need to have more than just a paper-based design document to apply for production funding.

- Pay to have senior mentors 'on tap' for developers.

- Don't have a pre-production fund. Too much like 'drip-feeding' the industry.

- Find a way that developers can access the skills they don't have, such as marketing and legal, etc. Workshops?

- Screen Australia to have a presence at events such as the Game Developers Conference (US) in order to raise Australian profile and galvanise the Australian developers there.

- Provide travel grants to key events, eg, Game Developers Conference.

- Don't try and please everyone because there's not enough money to do that!
-

24 January 2013