

Screen Australia announces over \$1.5 million for 11 digital games

Tuesday 7 February 2023: Screen Australia has announced 11 games that will share in over \$1.5 million of funding through the [Games: Expansion Pack fund](#). The games span VR, adventure, puzzle, platformer, horror, rhythm and more.

This announcement comes after the Federal Government launched the new National Cultural Policy, *Revive*, which commits to introducing a Digital Games Tax Offset and providing an additional \$12 million over four years from 2023-24 to support digital games developers and small and medium independent games studios through Screen Australia.

CEO of Screen Australia **Graeme Mason** said, “There are huge opportunities for growth in the local games sector. The Government’s \$12 million investment to support digital games developers and small and medium independent games studios will enable Screen Australia to support more Australian developers to create original games, build sustainable businesses and attract local and global audiences.”

Screen Australia’s Head of Online **Lee Naimo** said, “Alongside the recent announcement of *Revive*, we’re pleased to support this exciting mix of games from all across Australia that are bringing to life distinctly Aussie stories, from cattle farming in the Northern Territory to solving mysteries in the Victorian Alps, as well as the next project from the award-winning team at Fuzzy Ghost. It’s fantastic to see the ambition and skill of our local game creators, including driven first-time and solo developers, as they advance their careers.”

Targeted at emerging or small to medium independent game studios, Screen Australia’s existing Games: Expansion Pack provides direct funding for original Australian games with budgets below \$500,000. The fund is open for applications on an ongoing basis until 4 May 2023.

The Games: Expansion Pack first launched in March 2022, and the first round of funding [distributed over \\$4 million to 30 Australian games](#).

The funded games include:

- ***Bilkins’ Folly* (TAS):** A puzzle adventure game from Lead Developer Luke Webster of Webbysoft. Players explore an island as Percival Bilkins, treasure hunter extraordinaire, and together with their canine companion Drayton they must complete quests, solve mysteries and find hidden treasures in order to solve a family mystery. *Bilkins’ Folly* has been financed with support from Armor Game Studios.
- ***Call of the Golden Valley* (VIC):** A first-person, female-protagonist narrative adventure set in Victoria’s High Country, where players must search for a childhood friend who has vanished into the bush seemingly without a trace. But she’s not the only one - something mysterious is luring people to the mountains. Players explore a country town and navigate the enigmatic countryside to find their friend, all while exploring how fact gets tangled up in fiction. This game is developed by Creative Director Madeleine Clute of O’Saurus Studios.
- ***Conscript* (VIC):** An adventure survival game from Catchweight Studio and Lead Developer Jordan Mochi. Set during the First World War, this historically realistic gameplay follows a lone French soldier who must navigate twisted trenches, scavenge for limited supplies and solve complex puzzles - all while searching for their brother who is missing-in-action. Developed with the assistance of VicScreen.
- ***Copycat* (NSW):** A wholesome, narrative-driven game about rejection, belonging and the true meaning of home. It follows the story of a newly adopted shelter cat who becomes the victim of an elaborate plan when a jealous, stray copycat steals her place in the household. The game’s colourful visuals delight the senses while exploring dark emotional depths. *Copycat* is created by Spoonful of



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Wonder. The team includes Head of Art/Game Director Kostia Liakhov and Head of Narrative/Game Director Samantha Cable.

- ***Diets and Deities (NT)***: A rhythm cooking game that players will be able to taste. In a universe drained of its diversity and left to wallow in its smashed avo and vanilla soy latte, players must help Deities remember their culture by cooking dishes along to the music. Each of the dishes can also be made at home with the original recipes found in the game. *Diets & Deities* is created by Larrikin Interactive and the team includes Founder Dylan Bennett, Creative Director Miles McLoughlin, Lead Programmer Declan Smyth, Bininj Chef, language and culture consultant Ben Tyler, Composer James Mangohig and 2D Artist Skye Lavelle.
- ***GHOST CAM (WA)***: A spooky exploratory game where players search for ghosts in an abandoned bedroom which unfolds into a labyrinth. They will get to test their ghost finding skills, navigate the eerie environment, figure out clues and uncover the story carefully as the dreamscape can twist into a nightmare. This game is created by creative studio ARCH REBELS and the team includes Lead Developer Amy Louise Doherty, Lead Programmer Miles Hansen, Sound Designer Chris Head and Systems Designer Camille Woodthorpe.
- ***Janet DeMornay Is A Slumlord (and a witch) (NSW)***: A horror-comedy game from Fuzzy Ghost that explores the anxieties of renting in a world run by landlords. Players will explore their crumbling inner-city terrace house, solving puzzles to try and get back to the real world, all while trying to avoid the increasingly menacing behaviour of their landlord Janet, who is a witch. The creative team includes founders Pete Foley and Scott Ford.
- ***Misc. A Tiny Tale (WA)***: A 3D platforming adventure game from Tinyware Games and Lead Developer Michael Pearce. Players join Buddy and Bag Boy, two adorable robots made of miscellaneous items, as they lend a hand to other robots, make a difference by cleaning up mess, and follow an exciting journey.
- ***Pasture: The Livestock Simulator (NT)***: Set in the Australian Outback, players experience the highs and lows of being a pastoralist, doing battle with the weather, the markets, and Mother Nature as they build their Cattle Empire. This farming simulator game comes from Salty Games, including Managing Director Chas Cole, Lead Programmer Luke H and Creative Director Nathan Groves.
- ***The Sacred Acorn (SA)***: An adventure game from A Few Dragons where players explore the beautiful, mysterious land of Tansira as Ima, an adorably courageous squirrel. They must solve puzzles, discover secrets, defeat corrupted enemies, and make strange, cute friends that will guide them on their quest. The creative team includes Developer Keirron Stach, Art Director Lauren Nicholls and Producer Vivian Vandal.
- ***Trash (VIC)***: An online co-op survival craft adventure game set in E-Corp Island, a beautiful post-human world where strange and wondrous trash-based life thrives. Players must explore the island's different open world biomes, collecting materials and crafting different character forms which give them unique abilities to survive the environment and solve challenges. Created by Bin Chicken Studios, the Technical Director is Nick Margerison and Creative Director is Charlie Kenihan. Developed with the assistance of VicScreen.

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

To hear more about Screen Australia's Games funding, listen to the Games Funding 101 episode of the Screen Australia podcast [here](#).

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