

# Advocating for grants and tax incentives for game development

**Despite being part of the screen industry, our sector is excluded from the half a billion dollars of support the Australian Government provides to film and TV annually. To transform and elevate our industry, we are fighting for common-sense policies like making games eligible for Screen Australia funding and a 30 per cent tax offset, like the PDV offset for Australia's VFX industry. These are proven policies that have been implemented in the US, Canada, UK, Singapore and across the EU. We also lobby for continued and strengthened state and territory support for game developers.**

## How would federal games funding support the sector?

The Government provides substantial funding across Australian screen sector, from film and TV producers to content creators on YouTube, through funding programs administered by Screen Australia. Despite being screen content, video games are excluded from this funding. Game developers need funding for the same reasons as film and TV producers. It helps emerging talent to secure seed funding to get their projects off the ground, which helps them to obtain financing and investment, which helps them to hire the talent they need, which helps them complete their games - often leading to critical and commercial success. Australia's previous Interactive Games Fund, which was cut short after just one year into its four year term, showed genuine results in its short life, and helped to establish studios that are still successful today.

## How would a federal tax offset support the sector?

Under the Australian Screen Production Incentive, the Government provides various tax offsets to incentivise the production of Australian films and TV programs, encourage international producers to bring foreign productions to Australia, or make Post-Production, Digital and Visual (PDV) effects companies in Australia more competitive in the global market. There is currently no tax incentive for video game development, unlike in Canada and the UK, but if there was one, it would achieve the combined benefits of these other offsets. It would incentivise the production of ambitious Australian games, encourage global games companies to build permanent studios in Australia, and make Australian game developers internationally competitive in exporting their talent and skills. With a games offset, the scale of investment into Australia over the coming years could be in the billions, creating thousands of highly-skilled and futureproofed full-time jobs.

## What role do the states and territories play in supporting our sector?

Many jurisdictions support game development through their screen agencies and funds. While they can never replace the federal support we need, they provide vital funding. We work with the states and territories so that our sector is incorporated into their creative industries and screen strategies, and to help ensure that their games programs are effectively designed. We also advocate for the extension of state and territory screen production rebates to games, just like how South Australia has showed leadership in doing with its PDV rebate. Finally, we will continue to lobby the jurisdictions that have yet to support their game developers - including notably NSW.

*Ben Au, Director of Policy & Government Affairs, [ben@igea.net](mailto:ben@igea.net)*