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## SA Game Exhibition levels up with expanded SAGE Advice discussion panels program

South Australian Game Exhibition: February 7 and 8

Adelaide's biggest and most exciting video games showcase event, **South Australian Game Exhibition (SAGE)**, has announced the exciting program of speakers and panels at next month's free, family-friendly event.

Presented by the **South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC)** as part of the 2025 Adelaide Fringe Interactive program, SAGE is a super showcase of South Australia's video game development sector, with a huge range of locally made games on display to see and play on Friday 7 and Saturday 8 February at Adelaide Studios.

Now in its third year, SAGE 2025 is bigger and better than ever with two action-packed days of free all-ages fun including a record 37 exhibitors showcasing SA made video games across PC, mobile, console and VR/XR and more, including 14 studios exhibiting at SAGE for the first time.

The SAFC is also pleased to announce SAGE 2025 is being supported by **Screen Australia** through its [Games Festivals and Events Fund](#), and by Platinum Sponsor **Big Ant Studios** and State Government Partner **Arts South Australia**.

Returning this year is the popular [SAGE Advice program](#) of talks and discussion panels taking place across the two day-event, featuring local, national and international industry experts and leaders and SA developers and creatives. Topics cover everything from the history of SA video games and current tech trends, to jobs and education pathways and more, with opportunities and advice for newbies to professionals. Speakers include Big Ant Studios COO **Mark Bracken** (SA); Screen Australia Games Investment Manager **Goldie Bartlett** (VIC); CEO and Founder of Stella Maris Games **Ted DiNola** (USA) and Games Hub Managing Editor **Stephanie Panecasio** (NSW), plus education experts from **Flinders University**, **CDW Studios** and **UniSA** and a range of SA game developers and creatives.

In a new initiative for 2025, all SAGE Advice sessions will be filmed by SAGE Media Partner **Channel 44** and made available for repeat viewing after the event via the SAFC's Youtube channel, providing an ongoing information resource for the SA games sector and those interested in joining it.

Also returning in 2025 are the SAGE Awards: the **SAGE Elevate Award** for the best game in the Elevate section, with a prize of \$1,000 of legal services provided by SAGE sponsor Cam Rogers Legal, and the **SAGE Award for Best in Exhibition**, with a \$2,000 cash prize for the best game overall, provided by the SAFC.

Get a sneak peek at SAGE 2025 at the new [SAGE Steam event page](#), featuring a range of games from this year's exhibitors for you to preview and play right now! Go to <https://bit.ly/SAGESteam>

Following last year's bumper event which attracted more than 2,000 people across two days, SAGE 2025 is bigger and better than ever allowing video game fans, players, enthusiasts and everyone in between to experience exciting new South Australian made games first-hand and meet the people behind them. Learn all about South Australia's video game development industry and how the SAFC

supports it; find out more about the exciting career pathways on offer in the sector and how you can be a part of it and more - and it's all FREE! Get your free tickets now via the [Adelaide Fringe](https://www.adelaidefringe.com.au) and find more information at [sagameexhibition.com](https://www.sagameexhibition.com)

**SAGE ADVICE QUICK-LOOK PROGRAM**

**Friday 7 February**

- 11.00 – 11.45am *Beyond Coding: Unlocking Diverse Skills for Life and Career through Games Education*
- 12.15 – 1.00pm *Opportunities for Developers: Funding, Publishing, Getting Started*
- 1.30 – 2.15pm *Resilience and Innovation: Thriving in the Evolving Games Industry*
- 2.45 – 3.30pm *Made in SA: Celebrating South Australia's Most Legendary Games*
- 4.00 – 4.45pm *Game Changers: SA Developer Showcase I*

**Saturday 8 February**

- 10.30 – 11.15am *Big Ant Studios Presents: How (and why) to Join a Games Studio*
- 11.30 – 12.15pm *Kickstart Your Career: Education Pathways into Games*
- 12.45 – 1.30pm *Drawn to It: Animation, Illustration, and Art in Games*
- 1.45 – 2.30pm *Game Changers: SA Developer Showcase II*
- 3.00 – 3.45pm *Specialising in Success: Bringing Your Skill Set to Game Development*

More program detail available at the end of this release and [sagameexhibition.com/program](https://www.sagameexhibition.com/program)

**SAGE 2025 FEATURES:**

- 37 total exhibitors including 14 exhibiting at SAGE for the first time, spread across both sound stages at the SAFC's Adelaide Studios screen production facilities in Glenside;
- Informative displays from partner organisations across industry, education and more;
- A Refuel Zone featuring food trucks and refreshments, and
- The two-day "SAGE Advice" program of panel discussions featuring local game developers and national and international industry experts.

SAGE: SA Game Exhibition is FREE and open to all at Adelaide Studios, 1 Mulberry Road Glenside, Friday 7 February 10.00am to 5.00pm (Official opening by Arts Minister Andrea Michaels at 10.30am) and Saturday 8 February 10.00am to 4.00pm. Get your free tickets now via the [Adelaide Fringe](https://www.adelaidefringe.com.au) and find more information at [sagameexhibition.com](https://www.sagameexhibition.com)

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Cathy Gallagher 0416 227 282 [cathy@abcgfilm.com](mailto:cathy@abcgfilm.com)

**MEDIA DOWNLOADS (PHOTOS, VIDEO):** <https://bit.ly/3S3hBqW>

PRESENTED BY



**South Australian Film Corporation**

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## SAGE ADVICE FULL PROGRAM

### Friday 7 February

**11.00 – 11.45am**

#### ***Beyond Coding: Unlocking Diverse Skills for Life and Career through Games Education***

Join SA games education experts from UniSA, Flinders University and CDW Studios for an engaging and insightful discussion exploring the diverse skill sets cultivated through a games education and how they apply to various industries. This panel will delve into the larger benefits of studying games, extending beyond the realm of game development.

- **Simon Scales** – Director & Instructor, CDW Studios (SA)
- **Dr Lauren Woolbright** - Director of Games Research Lab & Lecturer, Flinders University (SA)
- **Prof. Stewart Von Itzstein** - Professorial Lead in IT, UniSA (SA)
- Chair: **Sorcha Millican-Nagle** - Employer Brand & Industry Relations Manager, Playside Studios (VIC)

**12.15 – 1.00pm**

#### ***Opportunities for Developers: Funding, Publishing, Getting Started***

Are you an aspiring game developer looking to kickstart your career? Get invaluable advice on navigating the early stages of game development from our panel of industry experts, with topics including securing funding, finding a publisher, building a supportive community and team and more.

- **Goldie Bartlett** - Games Investment Manager, Screen Australia (VIC)
- **Jens Schroeder** - Industry and Member Relations Director, IGEA (QLD)
- **Sorcha Millican-Nagle** - Employer Brand & Industry Relations Manager, Playside Studios (VIC)
- Chair: **James O'Connor** - Games Development Executive, SAFC (SA)

**1.30 – 2.15pm**

#### ***Resilience and Innovation: Thriving in the Evolving Games Industry***

With Australians spending \$4.4 billion on video games and hardware in 2023, and Australian game development studios generating more than \$339 million for the economy in 2024, there's no denying games are serious business! But as with any major industry, it's not without its challenges. In this panel our experts will examine the trends shaping the industry in Australia and worldwide, such as AI and machine learning, explore how developers and games businesses are rising to face emerging global challenges, and highlight the many successes and achievements of the Australian game industry that show how we can best take advantage of the sector's bright future.

- **Ted DiNola** – CEO and Founder, Stella Maris Games (USA)
- **Ron Curry** – CEO, IGEA (NSW)
- **Jon Cartwright** – Games Business Development Consultant (QLD)
- **Kirsty Parkin** – Founder and Director, Supaglu (SA)
- Chair: **Jason Imms** – Head of QA, Keywords Studios Australia (TAS)

**2.45 – 3.30pm**

#### ***Made in SA: Celebrating South Australia's Most Legendary Games***

Did you know *Hollow Knight* was developed in South Australia? Or that the state's first major game development studio began in the '90s? And that a South Australian company made the best version of a classic *Star Wars* game? Dive into South Australia's legendary video game history in this exciting and fun-filled panel discussion, where our experts – including developers who worked on these iconic titles - will share their insights, anecdotes and stories behind some of the best South Australian games ever made.

- **David Kazi** – Creative Director, Ember League (SA)
- **Dr Mike Cooper** – Technical Director, Tantalus South (SA)

- **Damon Reece** – Independent games writer and Narrative Designer (SA)
- **James O’Connor** – Game Development Executive, SAFC (SA)
- Chair: **Stephanie Panecasio** – Managing Director, Games Hub (NSW)

**4.00 – 4.45pm**

***Game Changers: SA Developer Showcase I***

South Australian video game developers share their personal journeys, professional experiences, and the creative processes behind their work. Gain insights into some of the diverse career paths within the games industry, learn about the challenges and triumphs these developers have faced, and discover what it takes to succeed in this dynamic field. Whether you’re an aspiring game developer, a seasoned professional, or simply a gaming enthusiast, this panel promises to inspire and inform.

- **David Kazi** – Ember League (SA)
- **Jonathan Kovarch** – Toasterface Games (SA)
- **Chantal Ryan** – We Have Always Lived in the Forest (SA)
- **Arthur Ah Chee** – Cerulean Creative Studios (SA)
- Chair: **Chris Button** – Editor, Gadget Guy (SA)

**Saturday 8 February**

**10.30 – 11.15am**

***Big Ant Studios Presents: How (and why) to Join a Games Studio***

One of Australia’s leading game development companies, Big Ant Studios opened their first Adelaide offices in 2023 and have since grown to become one of SA’s largest games sector employers. This panel will delve into what Big Ant looks for in new recruits, highlighting the skills and qualities that make candidates stand out. Learn about the advantages of working in a large, collaborative team and how it fosters creativity and innovation, and discover the role that bigger studios play in shaping the Australian game development ecosystem.

- **Mark Bracken** – COO, Big Ant Studios (SA)
- **Kirsty Parkin** – Founder and Director, Supaglu (SA)
- Chair: **James O’Connor** – Game Development Executive, SAFC (SA)

**11.30 – 12.15pm**

***Kickstart Your Career: Education Pathways into Games***

Explore the diverse and exciting career pathways that a games education can lead to and discover how a foundation in games education can be the key to unlocking a multitude of career possibilities. Our panel of experts will delve into how formal education in game development can open doors to various roles within the industry, from programming and design to production, marketing, and beyond. Learn about the different ways these pathways can manifest, the skills and experiences that are most valuable, and how to leverage your education to build a successful career in games.

- **Prof. Stewart Von Itzstein** - Professorial Lead in IT, UniSA (SA)
- **Dr Lauren Woolbright** – Director of Games Research Lab & Lecturer, Flinders University (SA)
- **Shane Bevin** – Lecturer in Digital Media/Screen, Flinders University (SA)
- **Dr Jacqueline Burgess** – Senior Lecturer, University of the Sunshine Coast (QLD)
- Chair: **Sorcha Millican-Nagle** – Employer Brand & Industry Relations Manager, Playside Studios (VIC)

**12.45 – 1.30pm**

***Drawn to It: Animation, Illustration, and Art in Games***

Discover the diverse opportunities available in the games sector for those with a creative background, and learn how to leverage your artistic talents to succeed in the gaming world. Our panel of experts will discuss their unique pathways into game development, highlighting how their artistic skills and experiences in animation and art have seamlessly transferred to their current roles in the gaming industry, from art and design to animating trailers. Whether you’re an aspiring artist, a

student of animation, or simply curious about the intersection of art and games, this panel offers valuable insights and inspiration from professionals who have successfully made the leap.

- **Bill Northcott** and **David Smith** – Founders and Directors, Half Giant (SA)
- **Rose Swincer** – 3D Artist, Mighty Kingdom (SA)
- **Ditte Wad Andersen** – Independent solo developer (SA)
- Chair: **James O'Connor** – Game Development Executive, SAFC (SA)

**1.45 – 2.30pm**

***Game Changers: SA Developer Showcase II***

South Australian video game developers share their personal journeys, professional experiences, and the creative processes behind their work. Gain insights into some of the diverse career paths within the games industry, learn about the challenges and triumphs these developers have faced, and discover what it takes to succeed in this dynamic field. Whether you're an aspiring game developer, a seasoned professional, or simply a gaming enthusiast, this panel promises to inspire and inform.

- **Katie Abela** – Stellar Advent (SA)
- **Jonathon Anderson-Wills** – Jonniemadeit (SA)
- **Euan Wynne-Jones** – Hellbyte Studios (SA)
- **Onnie Chan** – Founder ADA Labs and Women in Creative Tech (SA)
- Chair: **Chris Button** – Editor, Gadget Guy (SA)

**3.00 – 3.45pm**

***Specialising in Success: Bringing Your Skill Set to Game Development***

Discover the many diverse and rewarding career opportunities in the games industry that extend beyond traditional programming and design roles. This panel brings together industry experts who have carved out successful careers in specialist areas such as rigging, narrative design, QA, UI/UX design and more. Learn about the unique pathways these professionals have taken and the specialised skills they bring to the table, and gain valuable insights into the many different roles that make up this exciting industry.

- **Sarah Elliott** – Rigging and Art, Dino Rocket (SA)
- **Fran Warner** – Narrative Design, Mighty Kingdom (SA)
- **Nathan Pana** – Senior UI Artist, Playside Studios (SA)
- **Lucie Migne** – Senior Producer and former QA, Mighty Games (SA)
- Chair: **Jason Imms** – Head of QA, Keywords Studios Australia (TAS)

Plus more speakers still to be announced – visit [sagameexhibition.com.au/program](http://sagameexhibition.com.au/program) for further information.