

# GUIDELINES

## Digital Games Fund



South Australian **Film Corporation**

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### What is the program?

The Digital Games Fund offers grant funding to eligible South Australian game developers to aid in the development of digital games through to their next milestone.

The objectives of this program align with the South Australian Film Corporation Strategic Plan for 2025-2028:

- To assist South Australian game creators in reaching development milestones for new and upcoming games.
- To build a sustainable, long-term model of support for South Australian game creators that fosters new and innovative projects with commercial, critical, and artistic merit, fuelling SA company growth and helping local teams to thrive and expand.
- To grow the number of South Australian digital game titles released each year, and to assist more teams in qualifying for the SA VGD rebate.
- To advance diverse SA game development teams, and to give them opportunities to thrive in the global games marketplace.

### What is on offer?

Grants of up to \$100,000 are available for digital game development teams who are looking to develop their game towards its next significant milestone, including final release. This funding will come in the form of a one-off grant, which must be spent on the development of the game that the applicant has applied for.

Funding must help the applicants to develop their game to a significant milestone stage. The application must clearly define the stage the funding will support, and outcomes. Depending on the amount requested, milestone stages may include:

- Prototype
- Demo
- Vertical slice
- Early Access (Steam)
- 1.0 release
- Significant post-launch content updates (i.e. new levels, new modes, new characters)
- Porting to console, PC, Mac, VR or mobile

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### Who is eligible?

Applicants applying as an individual must:

- be over 18 years of age,
- possess a registered and active Australian Business Number (ABN),
- not be a full-time student,
- have all necessary rights and appropriate clearances to carry out the proposal,
- have read, and be compliant with, the SAFC's Terms of Trade,
- be a South Australian Resident (as defined in the [Terms of Trade](#))
- have no outstanding contractual obligations to the SAFC.

Applicants applying on behalf of a company must:

- Be incorporated and carrying on business in Australia and have its central management and control in Australia,
- Be registered in South Australia and have its principal place of business in South Australia for at least six months immediately prior to the date of the application,
- Be up to date with all relevant state and federal government obligations at the time of application for, and payment of, funding (including BAS, PAYG and GST obligations).

### What projects are eligible?

To be eligible games must meet all the following requirements:

- Digital games developed by South Australian teams (75% of the team must be primarily based in South Australia),
- Games intended for a digital release on any gaming platform (including but not limited to mobile, PC, Mac, console, VR/AR),
- Projects must involve a moderate degree of ludic interactivity (i.e. cannot be a film, player must be able to assert moderate control over proceedings. Games with light interactivity, including visual novels, are generally eligible),
- Games must be owned by the applicant (based on IP either owned or licensed by the applicant),
- Funding cannot be retrospective (i.e. it cannot cover a previous development milestone).

The following games that meet the above eligibility criteria are also eligible:

- Digital games that have already received funding from other funding bodies, e.g. Screen Australia, or Kickstarter,
- Games that have been released in Early Access through Steam (or other online stores) but are still being developed towards a 1.0 release version.

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### What projects are ineligible?

- Gambling games, including "social casino" games
- Non-digital games
- Games designed for educational purposes only, or business-to-business products (e.g. interactive instructional tutorials, educational research projects)
- Games that are not intended for commercial release
- Games based on external IP not owned or licensed by the applicant
- Games by teams that primarily consist of, or are run by, currently enrolled students in game-related courses or degrees
- Games that are deemed unlikely to receive classification within Australia
- Remasters and upscales of existing games, or games that have already received a full retail release
- Games developed by team members that are younger than 18 years of age

### Evaluation Criteria

- The project's originality and the team's ability to differentiate themselves in the market from similar products,
- Diversity of team,
- Accessibility concerns addressed,
- Both artistic and commercial prospects,
- Clear identification of market positioning,
- Proven game development record of the team (including student and amateur projects),
- The relative strength of core components presented, including visuals, storytelling, gameplay, and audio,
- Long-term achievability of the project, and the perceived likelihood of the game reaching a point of commercial release,
- Practicality and feasibility of the provided timeline and budget,
- The potential benefits of the project to the health and reputation of South Australian game development,
- Applicants that seek funding for further development or platform porting of already released games will need to demonstrate the critical commercial, and cultural success and impact of the current release.

In evaluating the project, the SAFC will consider any information and weight the above criteria as it judges appropriate to best serve the SAFC's [Strategic Objectives](#) and SAFC's [Diversity & Inclusion Strategy](#). The SAFC is committed to accessible content and encourages applicants to

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consider accessible features in game design. A resource for accessible game development can be found [here](#).

Specific assessment will be required for applications that include First Nations's content. For more information, please refer to SAFC's Terms of Trade (Working with First Nations Content and Communities) and [Screen Australia's Pathways & Protocols: a filmmaker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts](#), and SAFC's First Nations Cultural Protocols Guide.

## What can funds be used for?

Eligible spend includes:

- Staffing costs
- Legal fees & licensing costs
- Office hire
- Marketing costs, including costs associated with attendance or exhibition at markets and events, making trailers, and running paid promotion
- Mentoring and external support
- Purchase of computers, laptops or developer kits for development

## What can't the fund be used for?

Ineligible spend includes:

- Purchase of other equipment (i.e. computer mice, monitors, headsets, gaming consoles)
- Education
- Travel expenses

## How do I apply?

Applications for the Digital Games Fund are open once a year and must be made via the SAFC's online grants platform [safilm.smartygrants.com.au](https://safilm.smartygrants.com.au).

## Important Dates

Application Round Open	23 October 2025
Deadline to apply	5 December 2025
Eligibility Decision	19 December 2025
Panel Decision	23 February 2026

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### Application Materials

- A pitch deck (max 15 slides)
- Applicant warranty that they hold all applicable rights, and evidence of those rights including relevant agreements as applicable
- A Game Design Document (GDD) outlining the objectives, mechanics, game play and aesthetic design
- Video footage/trailer if the game is at prototype stage or beyond (3 mins max)
- Brief history/background of project
- Audience engagement plan
- Accessibility plan
- A budget breakdown showing how the money will be spent (it needs to show how this will help the project reach its next milestone)
- Statement of secured and anticipated third-party funding (if any)
- Documentation of secured third-party funding, as available
- A development timeline, up to and beyond the stage of development the applicant is seeking funding for (including launch and post-launch plans).
- Applicant and attached key creatives bios and (if applicable) previous credits
- For projects with First Nations material:
  - a statement setting out how First Nations content has been approached to date and plan for the stage of development applied for
  - Evidence of permissions from First Nations communities, and consultants
- Statement of any attached market and/or previous funding received, if applicable
- Applicant and SA team contact information, bio, curriculum vitae, demographic information and state of residency.

#### *Optional:*

- A playable prototype or demo, including instructions on running the demo and a list of minimum required specs (can also be a Figma flow or paper playable version if applicable)

### Further Requirements

Grant funding will be provided to successful applicants within the same financial year as application.

The SAFC must receive the following credit in a form no less prominent than that of any other funder:

*Development undertaken in South Australia with the support of the South Australian Film Corporation [insert SAFC Logo]*

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The Applicant shall ensure that the SAFC receives the SAFC Credit in the form specified above:

- on the splash screen, or within the game's opening credit block,
- on any page on which other credits are given, and
- in all publicity and media releases produced by the Applicant or at its direction in respect of the work and/or the game (except where giving such credit is not practicable where space is limited and no other credits are given).

Credit must appear in any publicly released demo or prototype of the game as well as its final release.

## Next Steps?

Before applying, all applicants must read SAFC's [Terms of Trade](#) and speak to the [SAFC Game Development Executive](#) regarding your intended SAFC grant request

For initial enquiries, please contact the SAFC Production team

Phone: 08 8394 2029

Email: [programs@safilm.com.au](mailto:programs@safilm.com.au)

(Note: All amounts in this guideline are quoted exclusive of GST, unless otherwise stated)