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CREATIVE EUROPE

Support for the audiovisual sector

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VIDEO GAMES



◀ Front cover: **Little Nightmares** is developed by Sweden's Tarsier studios. Released in 2017 on PC, PS4 and Xbox One, the game received Creative Europe development support in 2014.

Finland's Frozenbyte received Creative Europe development funding for **Trine 3: The Artifacts of Power** in 2014. The game is available on PC, Linux, Mac and PS4.

INTRODUCTION

Creative Europe's MEDIA sub-programme is the European Union's support programme for the film, television and digital media industries. With a budget of €1.46 billion, it runs from 2014-2020 and aims to improve the quality of European content and help European films, programmes and projects perform better internationally.

In this publication we highlight how Creative Europe supports video game developers by:

- providing funding for the development of narrative video game prototypes
- co-funding training courses and networking events which directly target the audiovisual community.



CD PROJEKT S.A. received a Creative Europe grant in 2015 for the development of **The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt – Blood and Wine**, which is available on PC, PlayStation 4 and Xbox One. Image courtesy of CD PROJEKT S.A. The Witcher Game © CD PROJEKT S.A.

DEVELOPMENT: VIDEO GAMES

WHAT DOES THIS FUNDING SUPPORT?

European video game developers with proven experience who want to develop innovative, narrative video games (from concept to the first version of a playable prototype), regardless of platform or expected distribution method, which are intended for commercial exploitation.

WHO IS THIS FUNDING FOR?

Applicant companies must:

- be established in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA sub-programme and be majority owned by nationals from those countries
- be registered for a minimum of 12 months and have video game development as their main business activity (SIC Code: 62011 Ready-made interactive leisure and entertainment software development)
- own the majority of the IP rights to the project for which support is being sought.

Applicant companies must also be able to demonstrate that they have developed/produced one previous video game. To be eligible, this game must:

- be credited to the applicant company (personal credits or any work contracted/sub-contracted by another company cannot be considered)
- have been commercially distributed (demonstrated by a relevant sales report showing revenues generated) within the last two calendar years.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

The non-repayable grant awarded to each project can range from €10,000 to €150,000 and can cover up to 50% of the eligible budget. The grant must be matched by other sources of funding or through the company's own investment.

HOW CAN THE GRANT BE SPENT?

Only activities relating to the early development phase (from initial idea, to production of the first playable prototype or trial version) of the video game are eligible. The grant can be used in four main areas during this phase:

- rights acquisition, research, writing, improving the character design, level design, gameplay etc.
- production of a playable prototype (trial version, alpha version or beta version – whichever comes first)
- travel to meet potential investors, attendance at events and conferences, brochures, website, pitching documents
- staff salaries, insurance, legal and accounting costs.

The costs within the proposed budget are eligible from the date of submission of the application.

WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY?

There should be at least 8 months between the date that you submit the application and the date that you enter into the 'production' phase of the game. This phase includes the testing and debugging of your playable prototype. If you have already created/released a playable prototype of the video game, it is too late to apply.



Developed by Image & Form in Sweden, **SteamWorld Heist** was supported by Creative Europe in 2014. The game has been released on PC, Mac, Linux, PS4, PS Vita, Nintendo 3DS, Wii U and iOS. Image © Image & Form

DEVELOPMENT: VIDEO GAMES

WHAT TYPES OF GAMES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORT?

Only narrative video games that feature in-game storytelling are eligible (both for the track record project and the project for which support is being sought). The story must be told or shown throughout the whole game (in-game storytelling) and not only as an introduction or an ending to the game.

Supported video games can be intended for any platform or expected distribution method but in all cases the game must be intended for commercial exploitation.

Supported games must also demonstrate:

- originality, innovation and creative value
- cultural diversity compared to mainstream works
- enhanced European cultural identity and heritage
- substantial interactivity with a narrative component
- a high level of ambition in terms of gameplay, user experience and artistic expression
- commercial ambition in European and international markets
- cross-border potential.

WHAT TYPES OF GAMES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORT?

The following projects are ineligible:

- reference works (encyclopaedias, atlases, catalogues, databases and similar)
- “how-to” works (instructional guides, manuals and similar)
- tools and software services aimed solely at technological development and/or used solely for further developing already existing game concepts
- information or purely transactional services
- projects promoting tourism
- multimedia art projects and installations
- social platforms, social networking, internet forums, blogs or similar activities
- projects including pornographic or racist material or advocating violence
- works of a promotional nature being part of a promotional campaign or advertising for a specific product and/or brand
- institutional productions to promote a specific organisation or its activities
- platforms for games
- (interactive) e-books, interactive fictions, interactive animations, interactive documentaries
- puzzle games, memory games, sports games, racing games, running games, rhythm/singing/dancing games, social games, quiz games, party games, versus-fighting games, word and spelling games, number games, mind games.



TRAINING AND MARKETS

Creative Europe's MEDIA sub-programme supports a wide range of training, festivals, markets and initiatives that promote European films, television programmes and video games. These events provide important opportunities for networking with professionals from across Europe and the rest of the world.

Examples of supported courses and events suitable for video game developers include:

CARTOON: three opportunities are offered to developers; CARTOON 360 a pitching forum for cross-media animation projects, CARTOON DIGITAL a three-day conference on creating entertainment for connected screens and CARTOON GAMES one-to-one meetings for animation, gaming and transmedia professionals attending Cartoon Movie.

THE BIENNALE COLLEGE - HYBRID: a training programme to help creative professionals navigate VR and the aesthetic and narrative opportunities it offers. The workshops encourages participants to explore both the creative, financial and technical elements of their projects as well as the potential engagement with audiences.

FILMINTERACTIVE: a meeting place where filmmakers, interactive directors, artists, marketers, game creators and potential investors can network and exchange their professional know-how. The core of the event is a marketplace for innovative audiovisual content gathering the authors of the projects and the potential distributors and content buyers representing European media, brands and venture capital funds.

VR ACCELERATOR EUROPE: a "train the talents" initiative for writers, developers and creative producers that looks at the technical, psychological and narrative tools needed to write, develop, shoot and create rapid prototypes of VR projects.

IF LAB - iDROPS: a training course that helps creatives produce and develop their online factual interactive stories (e.g. interactive documentaries, serious games, digital graphic novels).

VR/AR CONTENTS MARKET: a European market dedicated to the production of content for virtual and/or augmented reality across the fields of film, TV, transmedia and gaming. The event aims at encouraging smaller audiovisual companies to produce high-quality content and supporting access to both technology and finance.

PROMISED LAND: a training course run by Poland's CD Projekt that brings together artists working in film, gaming, and the advertising industries. The course aims to blur the boundary between digital and traditional art and is aimed at both experienced professionals as well as enthusiasts wishing to take their skills to the next level.

For more information and to find the right initiative for you, visit: www.creative-europe-media.eu

You can also sign up to our MEDIA sub-programme newsletter and follow us on Facebook and Twitter for up-to-date information and deadline reminders for these funded projects.



French developers Small Bang pitch their project **Ulysses** at the 2016 edition of Cartoon 360, a Creative Europe-funded initiative for cross-media projects held in Barcelona.
© CARTOON



Participants networking at an event organised by Creative Europe Desk UK at the ICA in 2016.
Photo by Linda Ny Lind.

GET IN TOUCH

Creative Europe Desk UK offers free advice and support to UK applicants and organises a range of workshops, seminars and industry events throughout the year.

Visit our website to browse funding opportunities, be inspired by funded projects and keep up-to-date with the latest deadlines via our e-newsletter.

www.creativeeuropeuk.eu

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