

Funding Serious Games



MINI-LECTURE BY JOY HOPKINS

APRIL 28, 2013

Today's Topics



- 7 routes to funding your serious game
 - Self-funding
 - Crowd funding
 - Publisher funding
 - Angel/Venture Capital funding
 - Grant funding
 - Government funding
 - Company funding
- 3 small ideas for making your big ideas a reality

Funding Option #1: Self-Funding



- Not possible for most of us
- Highest risk, highest reward
- Will assume potentially great losses if game publishers do not sign



Funding Option #2: Crowd Funding



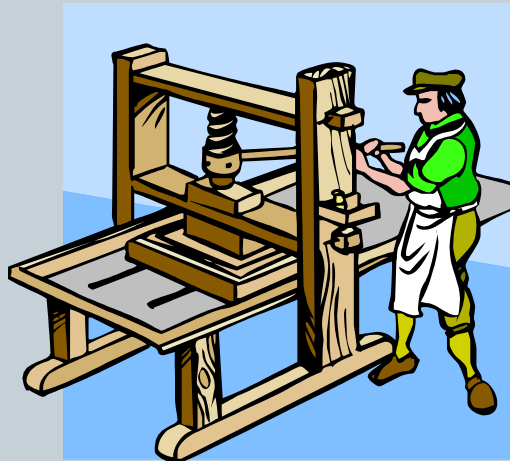
- More common option
- Create game while maintaining day job until you can make enough money to quit
- Try to get some funds via pitching your idea:
 - The Crowdfunding Bible: <http://www.crowdfundingguides.com/>
 - Gambitious: <http://gambitious.com/>
 - Kickstarter:
<http://www.kickstarter.com/discover/categories/games?ref=sidebar>
 - Indiegogo: <http://www.indiegogo.com/>
 - The Indie Fund: <http://indie-fund.com/apply/>
 - Smallknot: <http://smallknot.com/>
 - RocketHub: <http://www.rockethub.com/>



Funding Option #3: Publisher Funding



- Proven industry track record required
- Reputable team and strong demos a must
- Large “AAA” PC games, console games, or digital distribution budgets
- Low risk, low reward



Funding Option #4: Angel/VC Funding



- Usually takes more time and involves more legally binding agreements
- Funding may be available earlier than publisher route/before you get to demo stage
- May have more creative control up front
- Angels/VCs likely only agree to funding if take large ownership in company and can replace the team if unhappy with progress throughout the funding period



Funding Option #5: Grant Funding



- Grants may be available through academic institutions (these may be tied to government grants or other public initiatives, joint program collaboratives, etc)
- May be hard to break in if you are not professor, student, or otherwise in the academic field with proven experience/publications



Funding Option #6: Government Funding



- Government funding may be available through local state and federal government agencies (Dept. of Education, Dept. of Defense, National Science Foundation, etc.)
- Highly competitive
- Agencies may expect you to create a multi-million AAA game with much fewer funds



Funding Option #7: Company Funding



- Work for a company that invests in game projects and may decide to fund your game
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILFC4PmnRo8>
- May confront conflict of interest issues
- Get paid you to work in industry and gain experience and reputation
- Search jobs at:
 - <http://www.gamejobs.com/>
 - <http://www.micrysweb.com/office/gamejob.html>
 - <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Serious-Games-Group-137156>

Tips for turning your ideas into a reality



- Connect with people who have “been there, done that” by joining groups on LinkedIn and popular game forums
- Business plan in succinct PowerPoint (must communicate pressing need for game, why your team is best qualified to deliver, cost estimates, and timeline) and make it available online
- Set up doable, concrete goals on your calendar with reminders (e.g. reach out to 1 person in gaming industry by MM/DD/YYYY)

References



- Obscure (<http://www.obscure.co.uk/articles-2/funding-for-game-projects/>)
- Allen Financial Insurance Group - Film Production Completion Bond
(http://www.eqgroup.com/completion_bond.htm)
- Kickstarter Alternatives
(<http://mashable.com/2012/12/06/kickstarter-alternatives/>)

Thank You!



- Please see pdf file of this mini-lecture to download useful links available at:
<http://joycehopkins.com/en/tc-830.php>
- Best of luck to you all!