

## **4) SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN VIDEO GAMES (CALL EACEA 24/2018)**

### **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this call for proposals the following definitions shall apply:

**Accessibility features:** specific game features which enhance the accessibility for gamers with disabilities and other impairments.

**Alpha version:** one of the first iterations of a video game. The Alpha version is usually not complete and most likely unstable and comes before the **Beta version**.

**Beta version:** an improved and more stable iteration of the **Alpha version** of a video game after a first phase of **testing and debugging**. The Beta version usually contains most features of a video game, but still needs **testing and debugging**. The Beta version can be closed (restricted group of invited testers) or open (to a larger public).

**Commercial distribution:** the video game must have generated revenues, i.e. a financial income. These revenues can be generated, for example, from the retail sales of the game, from the sales of in-game items or from advertising. However, being commissioned and paid by a client to produce a video game does not constitute a commercial exploitation/distribution per se. Early Access is not accepted as commercial distribution because an Early Access game is an unfinished version of the game (prototype).

**Development:** the phase starting from the first idea until the production of the first **playable prototype** or first **trial version**, whichever comes first.

**Game:** an activity played according to rules in a specific game environment and whose achievement is a victory.

**Game Design Document (GDD):** a document created by the development team describing amongst others the story, the characters, the design (level, sound, artworks...), the **gameplay**, the **GUI**, the target audience, etc.

**Game mechanics:** all the different rules and commands programmed in the game and creating the game experience.

**Gameplay:** How the game is played. The gameplay is based on the game mechanics and on the game design.

**Gold Master:** the completed final version of a video game from which physical and/or digital copies will be made. The Gold Master is equivalent to Release to Manufacturing or Ready to Market (RTM) and to Release Candidate.

**Graphical User Interface (GUI):** a type of interface allowing users to interact with a device through the use of images / icons in conjunction with text.

**Head-up Display (HUD):** the display of the most important elements of a video game on the screen. The purpose of the HUD is to quickly and easily access the main information of the game (score, health bar, mini-map, experience points, money, etc.) while focusing on the gameplay.

**Intellectual Property (IP):** intangible property resulting from a creation and protected by law from being copied or plagiarised.

**Medium:** a means of storage of a **video game**. It can be physical or dematerialised.

**Narration/storytelling:** the process of narrating or telling a story.

**Platform:** electronic device on which a video game can be played.

**Playable Prototype:** is understood under the current guidelines as **Alpha version, Beta version** or **Trial version**.

**Production:** the phase starting from the testing and debugging of the first **playable prototype** or **trial version** until the end the production of the **Gold Master** or equivalent.

**Story:** a description of real or imaginary, inter-connected, characters and events, written with a view to be told or shown.

**Testing and debugging:** stage of the **production** phase of a video game aimed at finding problems and solving them.

**Trial version:** the first iteration of the first playable level of a video game. It can be played, tested and used for seeking financial partners.

**Video game:** a type of game played on a computer, a game console or other electronic devices.

## 1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

See Part A.

## 2. OBJECTIVES– PRIORITIES

### 2.1 Objectives

Within the specific objective of reinforcing the European audiovisual sector's capacity to operate transnationally and internationally, one of the priorities of the MEDIA Sub-programme is to:

- increase the capacity of audiovisual operators to develop European audiovisual works with a potential to circulate in the Union and beyond and to facilitate European and international co-production.

The MEDIA Sub-programme shall provide support for the following measures:

- the development of European audiovisual works in particular films and television works such as fiction, documentaries, children's and animated films, as well as interactive works such as video games and multimedia with enhanced cross-border circulation potential.

The objective is to increase the capacity of European video game producers to develop projects with highly innovative content and quality gameplay, which will have the potential to circulate throughout Europe and beyond and to improve the competitiveness of the European video games industry in European and international markets by enabling the retention of intellectual property by European developers.

Under this support scheme, applicants may submit a proposal to develop a concept and project (activities to the point that the concept leads to a playable prototype or trial version) of highly innovative and creative narrative storytelling video games designed for commercial exploitation for PCs, consoles, mobile devices, tablets, smart phones and other technologies.

#### Expected results:

- increased quality, appeal, feasibility and cross-border potential for selected projects
- stronger position on the European and international markets for Video Games developers

### 2.2 Targeted projects

The MEDIA Sub-programme supports European video game production companies with proven experience interested in developing a video game concept or project presenting:

- a high level of originality and innovative and creative value, that represents cultural diversity and Europe's cultural identity and heritage;
- a high level of commercial ambition and extensive cross-border potential able to reach European and international markets.

## 3. TIMETABLE

Stages	Date and time or indicative period
Deadline for submitting applications	27 February 2019 – 12:00 (noon, Brussels time)
Evaluation period	March –July 2019

Information to applicants	August 2019
Signature of grant decision/agreement	October/November 2019
Starting date of the action	Date of the signature of the grant agreement or notification of the grant decision or the date of submission of the application (see section 6.3)
Duration of the action	36 months from the starting date of the action

#### 4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects is estimated at EUR 3.78 M.

The financial contribution under these Guidelines is between EUR 10.000 and EUR 150.000 provided the amount does not exceed 50% of the total eligible costs of the action.

#### 5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

See Part A.

The artistic material related to the project must be included in 'Annex 1 – Detailed description of the project' itself and cannot be provided under the form of downloadable documents through internet links.

#### 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications which comply with the following criteria will be subject of an in-depth evaluation.

##### 6.1 Eligible applicants

**This call for proposals is open to European video game production companies which have been legally constituted for at least 12 months prior to the submission date and that can demonstrate a recent success.**

A **European company** is a company owned, whether directly or by majority participation (i.e. majority of shares), by nationals of Members States of the European Union or nationals of the other European countries participating in the MEDIA Sub-programme and registered in one of these countries.

For information on the countries participating in the MEDIA Sub-programme, see Part A, Section 6.1.

An updated list of the countries can be found on the following link: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/library/eligibility-organisations-non-eu-countries\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/library/eligibility-organisations-non-eu-countries_en)

A **video game production company** is a company whose main object and activity is video game production/development (or equivalent) as indicated in the official national registration documents, unless registration under specific activity codes is not required by national law, in which case the status as video game production/development company will be verified on the basis of the track record of the company.

A **legally constituted company** is a company which is founded by a legal act compliant with the relevant legislation.

**A company with a recent success is understood as follows:** The applicant must prove that it has produced or developed a previous video game that is eligible under the terms described in Section 6.2 and that has been commercially distributed after 01/01/2016 and before the date of submission of the application. Concerning the production of a previous video game, having been sub-contracted to develop and/or produce a previous eligible video game is not considered as a track record for a recent success. Personal credits cannot be considered as track records either. An Early Access game is not eligible as a recent success because it is not a completed video game yet and is still being developed.

To prove the commercial distribution of a previous eligible video game, the applicant must provide a relevant sales report over the reference period.

Applicants must provide the requested information about the previous eligible video game in the dedicated section of the electronic application form. In case the previous video game in the application form is not eligible, the application will be ineligible even if the applicant is able to provide information on another previous video game that respects the eligibility criteria.

**The company must also own the majority of rights related to the submitted project.** No later than on the date of submission, the applicant must have a duly dated and signed contract<sup>15</sup> covering the rights to the artistic material included in the application. If the project is an adaptation of an existing work (literary, audiovisual, comic-strip etc.), the applicant must also hold the majority of the rights relating to the rights of adaptation to this work<sup>16</sup>.

## 6.2 Eligible activities

**Only the activities relating to the development phase for the following projects are eligible:** Narrative storytelling video games regardless of platform or expected distribution method. 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. In all cases the video game must be intended for commercial exploitation.

The development phase is understood as the phase starting from the first idea until the production of the first playable prototype or first trial version, whichever comes first.

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;

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<sup>15</sup> The following types of contracts will be accepted:

- an option agreement concerning the transfer of rights between the author and the applicant company, of an adequate duration to cover the whole development schedule and clearly setting out the conditions for exercising the option; or
- a contract transferring the rights from the author to the applicant company.

The option agreement or transfer of rights contract can be replaced by:

- a unilateral declaration of the transfer of rights to the applicant company where the author is the producer, a shareholder or an employee of the company;
- a co-production or co-development agreement duly dated and signed by the parties and clearly showing that the applicant company holds the majority of the rights at the date of the application.

<sup>16</sup> Option agreement or transfer of rights contract duly dated and signed.

- projects promoting tourism;
- multimedia art projects and installations;
- websites being, or dedicated specifically to, 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.

**The production phase (see definition) of the submitted project must not be scheduled to start before 8 months after the date of submission of the application.**

### **6.3 Eligible applications**

Applicants may submit only one application in the frame of this call for proposals.

Applications requesting a financial contribution of less than EUR 10.000 are ineligible.

Activities may not start before the date of signature of the grant agreement or notification of the grant decision. However, according to Article 193 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council, in duly justified cases if the development process for the project for which support is being sought is already ongoing and cannot be put on hold for the duration of the selection process for reasons inherent to the nature of the development process, the period of eligibility of costs related to the project will start on the date of submission of the application. Activities must end at the latest 36 months after the start date. If the project enters into production before the end of this period, the action ends on the date of entry into production of the project.

However, if after the signing of the decision/agreement and the start of the project it becomes impossible for the beneficiary, for fully justified reasons beyond its control, to complete the project within the scheduled period, an extension to the action and to the eligibility period may be granted. A maximum extension of 6 additional months will be granted, if requested before the deadline specified in the agreement/decision. The maximum duration will then be 42 months after start date of the action.

Only applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria will be considered for a grant. If an application is deemed ineligible, a letter indicating the reasons will be sent by electronic mail to the applicant.

## **7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

### **7.1 Exclusion from participation**

**See Part A.**

### **7.2 Rejection from the award procedure**

**See Part A.**

### 7.3 Supporting documents

See Part A.

## 8. SELECTION CRITERIA

See Part A.

### 8.1 Financial capacity

See Part A.

The applicants' financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents:

- a) Low value grants ( $\leq$  EUR 60 000):
  - a declaration on their honour.
- b) Grants  $>$  EUR 60 000:
  - a declaration on their honour
  - the profit and loss account as well as the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts were closed.

### 8.2 Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action. In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour and for those applying for a grant above EUR 60.000 the following supporting documents:

- a summary of the activities of the applicant over the last two years (if not fully available, an organisation chart of the applicant showing the structure of the organisation and the functions of the main staff);
- curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the operation within each partner institution;

## 9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria :

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Max. Weighting</b>
1	Quality of the content and activities	Quality of the content, the storytelling of the project and originality of the concept against existing works	30
2	Innovative character of the project	Innovation i.e. the extent to which the project pushes the boundaries of the existing offer proposing "cutting edge" techniques and content	20
3	Relevance and European added-value	The development strategy and potential for European/international exploitation (including management of IP rights)	20
4	Dissemination of project results	The distribution, communication and marketing strategy and suitability for the target audience including accessibility features	20

5	Impact and sustainability	The financing strategy for the development and production and the feasibility potential of the project	10
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Additional points for:

Description	Extra points
A project <b>specifically</b> targeted at children up to the age of 12 years old as evidenced by the content being suitable for and the strategies being specifically targeted at this age group	5

Detailed description of the award criteria and breakdown of points:

<b>1. Quality of the content, the storytelling of the project and originality of the concept against existing works</b>	<b>30 points</b>
1a. Quality of the story and storytelling and originality of the concept	10 points
1b. Quality of the content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality of the graphic and sound design (if available)</li> <li>• quality of the level and character design (if available)</li> <li>• visual approach (as shown through e.g. artwork, mock-ups, sketches, mood boards, etc.)</li> </ul>	10 points
1c. Quality and originality of the gameplay and integration between gameplay and storytelling	10 points
<b>2. Innovation i.e. the extent to which the project pushes the boundaries of the existing offer proposing "cutting edge" techniques and content</b>	<b>20 points</b>
2a. Innovative techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• innovative aspects in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ gameplay</li> <li>○ use of new technologies or new platforms</li> <li>○ Graphical User Interface</li> <li>○ Head-up Display (or HUD)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 points
2b. Innovative content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• innovative aspects in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ storytelling</li> <li>○ visual/graphic approach</li> <li>○ musical/sound approach</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 points
<b>3. The development strategy and potential for European/international exploitation (including management of IP rights)</b>	<b>20 points</b>
3a. The development strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequacy of the development plan to the needs of the project</li> <li>• sufficiency of detail</li> <li>• adequacy of development schedule planned</li> </ul>	10 points
3b. Potential for European/international exploitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transnational appeal taking into account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the subject,</li> <li>○ the type of game</li> </ul> </li> <li>• potential to cross borders taking into account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the creative team,</li> <li>○ the story and characters</li> <li>○ the strategies presented</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 points
<b>4. The distribution, communication and marketing strategy and suitability for the target audience including accessibility features</b>	<b>20 points</b>



4a. The distribution strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance of the distribution strategy in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ distribution methods foreseen,</li> <li>○ choice of platform/media</li> <li>○ partners in place or envisaged</li> <li>○ awareness of the markets, European/international vision</li> <li>○ choice of territories (local, European, international)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 points
4b. The communication and marketing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance of the marketing strategy in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ marketing channels and promotional activities</li> <li>○ adequacy of the communication and marketing plan</li> <li>○ unique selling points (USP)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	5 points
4c. Suitability for the target audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified target audience taking into account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ gender</li> <li>○ age</li> <li>○ game rating (PEGI or equivalent)</li> <li>○ type of users and platform</li> </ul> </li> <li>• project adapted to the target audience</li> <li>• project encouraging accessibility for gamers with disabilities and other impairments</li> </ul>	5 points
<b>5. The financing strategy for the development and production and the feasibility potential of the project</b>	<b>10 points</b>
5a. The financing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality and realism of the financing strategy/plan</li> <li>• adequacy of the financing strategy compared to the estimated production costs</li> <li>• awareness of the suitable potential partners</li> <li>• experience or ability of the applicant to secure the necessary co-financing</li> </ul>	5 points
5b. Feasibility potential of the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• likelihood of success due to artistic qualities</li> <li>• potential to attract distributor(s) / publisher(s)</li> <li>• potential to go into production</li> <li>• sales potential and revenue streams</li> </ul>	5 points

## 10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

### See Part A.

The general conditions applicable to the decision (General Conditions II.a) are available in the 'Documents register' of the Agency website: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/conditions\\_ii\\_a.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/conditions_ii_a.pdf)

## 11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

### 11.1 General principles

#### a) Non-cumulative award

### See Part A.

#### b) Non-retroactivity

**See Part A.**

- c) Co-financing

**See Part A.**

- d) Balanced budget

**See Part A.**

- e) Implementation contracts/subcontracting

**See Part A.**

- f) Financial support to third parties

The applications may not envisage provision of financial support to third parties.

## **11.2 Funding forms**

**See Part A.**

### ➤ **Maximum amount requested**

See 'Maximum amount requested' in Part A, Section 11.2.A.

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-financing rate of 50% of the total eligible costs.

### ➤ **Eligible costs**

See 'Eligible costs' in Part A, Section 11.2.A.

#### Eligible direct costs

See 'Eligible direct costs' in Part A, Section 11.2.A. Note, however, that costs of financial support to third parties are not eligible under this call. Moreover, the scales approved annually by the Commission do not apply for subsistence and travel costs.

#### Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

See 'Eligible indirect costs (overheads)' in Part A, Section 11.2.A.

### ➤ **Ineligible costs**

See 'Ineligible costs' in Part A, Section 11.2.A. In addition, any costs incurred by the beneficiary but re-invoiced to third parties are ineligible.

### ➤ **Calculation of the final grant amount – Supporting documents**

See 'Calculation of the final grant amount – Supporting documents' in Part A, Section 11.2.A.

### ➤ **Calculation of the final grant amount**

See 'Calculation of the final grant amount' in Part A, Section 11.2.A.

#### *Non-profit rule*

See 'Non-profit rule' in Part A, Section 11.2.A.

The verification of non-profit does not apply to low value grants, i.e. ≤EUR 60 000.

### **11.3 Payment arrangements**

A pre-financing payment corresponding to 70% of the grant amount will be transferred to the beneficiary within 30 days either of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement, or of the notification of the grant decision, provided all requested guarantees have been received.

If specified in the grant agreement/decision an interim payment shall be paid to the beneficiary. An interim payment is intended to cover the beneficiary's expenditure on the basis of a request for payment when the action has been partly carried out. For the purpose of determining the amount due as interim payment, the reimbursement rate to be applied to the eligible costs approved by the Agency shall be 50%.

The Agency will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the beneficiary on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 11.2 above). If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the Agency through a recovery order.

### **11.4 Pre-financing guarantee**

**See Part A.**

## **12. PUBLICITY**

### **12.1 By the beneficiaries**

**See Part A.**

Next to the requirement to give prominence to the name and logo of the Creative Europe - MEDIA Sub-programme on all publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project, the applicant must also include a mention of the development support on onscreen credits of the final produced project when applicable.

### **12.2 By the Agency and/or the Commission**

**See Part A.**

### **12.3 Communication and dissemination**

**See Part A.**

### **13. DATA PROTECTION**

**See Part A.**

### **14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

#### **14.1 Publication**

The call for proposals is being published on the Internet site of the EACEA Agency at the following address: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/development-video-games-2019\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/development-video-games-2019_en)

#### **14.2 Registration in the Participant Portal**

**See Part A.**

Details on the supporting document that need to be uploaded in the portal can be found on the following link (under the heading "How to apply"): [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/development-video-games-2019\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/development-video-games-2019_en)

#### **14.3 Submission of the grant application**

**See Part A.**

#### **14.4 Rules applicable**

**See Part A.**

#### **14.5 Contacts**

For any further information please contact your Creative Europe desk:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/creative-desks\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/creative-desks_en.htm)

Contact within the Agency: [EACEA-MEDIA-DEVELOPMENT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EACEA-MEDIA-DEVELOPMENT@ec.europa.eu)

If you encounter a technical problem in relation to the e-Form, please ensure that you contact the HelpDesk well in advance of the deadline for submission: [EACEA-HELPDESK@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EACEA-HELPDESK@ec.europa.eu)

#### **Annexes:**

All the annexes are available on the EACEA/MEDIA website: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/support-for-development-european-video-games-2019\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/support-for-development-european-video-games-2019_en)

For details on the annexes to be attached to the online application form and the documents to be uploaded to the Participant Portal, please consult, the Guide for Applicants, available on the call webpage: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/support-for-development-european-video-games-2019\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/support-for-development-european-video-games-2019_en)

#### **Annexes to be included in the application form:**

- Annex 1 - Detailed description of the project

(A word or pdf document containing the artistic material related to the project must be attached to the eForm)

- Annex 2 - Declaration on applicant's honour  
(The declaration on the applicant's honour on the standard template must be attached to the eForm)
- Annex 3 – Detailed budget and sources of financing  
(The budget form on the standard template must be attached to the eForm)
- Annex 4 - Track record of the applicant company/producer  
(The track record of the applicant company on the standard template must be attached to the eForm)
- Annex 5 – Proof related to previous work and miscellaneous  
(A word or pdf document containing the production/development credit and sales report to the previous work and additional material about the submitted project must be attached to the eForm)

**Additional annexes published with the call:**

Expert guide

Sample Grant agreement/decision