



PAX Market Support Program

Grant Guidelines

About the program

Screen NSW and PAX Australia is offering up to 10 NSW-based independent game developers the opportunity to receive funding support to exhibit their digital game at PAX Australia in Melbourne 10 - 12 October 2025.

This initiative has been created to provide a platform for NSW indie developers to showcase their games in a dedicated pod situated in the PAX Rising section in the main expo hall.

PAX Rising is a dedicated area at PAX Australia that provides an opportunity for indie developers to demonstrate new releases to players, media and industry representatives.

Successful applicants to Screen NSW's PAX Market Support Program will be able to access a fully subsidised PAX Rising pod package within a dedicated Screen NSW section. Screen NSW will finance the cost of each individual PAX Rising exhibition pod package via a grant to PAX Australia for up to 10 applicants.

The program is funded and administered by Screen NSW, as a unit within the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS).

- Applications open: Friday 30 May 2025
- Applications close: Friday 13 June 2025 at 2pm AEDT
- Grant Value: \$2,289.10 (including GST)
- Grant Type: Open, Competitive
- [Program page](#)
- [Apply here](#)

Program objectives

The objectives of the program are to:

- Accelerate the growth of the NSW digital games sector
- Enable NSW based independent game companies to gain recognition, attract interest and grow investment
- Provide the opportunity for independent game companies to enhance their careers and visibility
- Improve sustainability of the digital games industry.

Contact & support

For further information or clarification, please contact Screen NSW: PDV & Digital Games Program team pdvgames@screen.nsw.gov.au

Screen NSW staff are available to provide technical advice and general information to potential applicants on the interpretation of these guidelines, including the types of activity eligible for funding and support with the online application process.

Screen NSW staff cannot help directly with your application. To maintain a fair, staff cannot edit or correct any applications or provide advice on the content or choices required against the Assessment Criteria.

Eligibility

Who can apply

Applicants must:

- If a company, be a NSW based company that is:
 - Incorporated and registered in Australia and have its principal place of business in NSW (i.e. have their central management and control in NSW and carry out business in NSW for at least six months immediately before the date of application)
 - Have no more than 5 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees at application;

or

- If an individual:
 - Be over 18 years of age; and
 - Be a NSW resident (i.e., lived in NSW for at least six months immediately before the date of application).

Applicants must also:

- Have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Own or control the necessary rights to any game projects taken to exhibition or have the written permission of the rights holder to represent the projects
- Agree to travel to PAX AUS 2025 and be prepared to cover their travel, accommodation and other expenses associated with their attendance at PAX Australia 2025
- Be able to attend the exhibition and manage their designated pod at PAX Rising from 10 - 12 October 2025 during the hours of 10am-6pm daily AEDT
- Have a playable game that will be ready to showcase for PAX Australia 2025.

Who cannot apply

Applicants cannot be:

- Full-time secondary or tertiary students
- Educational or training institutions or full-time employees of educational or training institutions
- A licensee of a service under the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Cth)* or a related body corporate of such a licensee (as defined in the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*) or a or a [Commissioning Platform](#) or a distributor or telecommunications company, or an employee (full-time or part-time) of a company owned by any Broadcaster, Commissioning Platform, distributor or telecommunications company or a distributor or telecommunications company, or an employee (full-time or part-time) of a company owned by any Broadcaster, Commissioning Platform, distributor or telecommunications company
- A federal or state or territory government screen agency or employee (full-time or part-time) of any federal, state or territory screen agency
- In breach of any obligation under any funding agreement it has with the NSW Government.

Eligible games

- Games for entertainment purposes
- Games that completely digital
- Games for any platform including console, desktop, tablet, mobile, VR/AR, Multi-player and single-player games
- Games must be playable (in at least beta form) and intended for public release.

Ineligible games

- Games that are likely to be rated at 18+
- Games that are likely to be Refused Classification under the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995*
- Games involving gambling services, feature or link exploitative, or unethical pay-to-win or play-to-earn mechanics as defined in Clause 4 of the *Commonwealth Interactive Gambling Act 2001*

- Games involving 'gambling' and 'unlawful game' as defined in the *Unlawful Gambling Act 1998 (NSW)*
- Games must not be considered offensive and must not contain nudity or drug references
- Games developed for advertising or corporate marketing
- Games made for internal training purposes and for curriculum material
- Games that are not completely digital (board games or hybrid digital/physical games).

Funding

Available Funding

Funding is limited for this program to support up to 10 eligible applicants. The program will provide support for successful applicants to access a fully subsidised PAX Rising exhibition pod package within a dedicated Screen NSW section.

The total pool of funds available for this program is \$22,891 (including GST).

What you can get funding for

Screen NSW will finance the cost of an individual PAX Rising exhibition pod package via a grant to PAX Australia on behalf of each successful applicant.

The standard value of an individual PAX Rising exhibition pod package is \$2,289.10 inclusive of GST. Successful recipients will be required to enter a contract with Screen NSW acknowledging that the cost of the pod package will be paid directly to PAX Australia on the applicant's behalf. PAX Australia will issue a ticket and manage exhibitor details and requirements directly with each successful applicant.

PAX Rising exhibition pod package includes:

- Indie pod stand
 - o Total Height – 3000mm
 - o Height of Signage and Frame, from Table – 1980mm
 - o Height of Cabinet – 1000mm
 - o Width of Cabinet Side – 1360mm
 - o Width of Signage and Frame – 2020mm
 - o Radius of Table – 1020mm
- Printed back wall signs for each stand. *The exhibitor must provide a high-quality image (2020mmW x 1964mmH)*
- 1 x arm light per stand
- 1x 4 amp power point per stand
- Furniture in the form of a semi-circular table with cable management hole, one storage cabinet (unlockable) and two stools
- Public liability insurance
- An allocation of 2 x PAX Australia exhibitor badges.

Please refer to [PAX Australia Guidelines](#) for more information with regards to Pod guidelines.

The pod package does **not** include: Internet or Audio-Visual Equipment. Internet can be obtained from the venue for wi-fi and cabled services.

Successful applicants must be prepared to travel to PAX Australia 2025 and to cover their own expenses to attend the exhibition and manage their designated pod within PAX Rising for the entire period from 10 - 12 October 2025.

Diversity Commitment

Screen NSW is dedicated to promoting fairness and equality in its programs and interactions with the community. Our main priorities include supporting increased participation in the industry of people from underrepresented groups, including:

- First Nations people
- Regional NSW
- Western Sydney
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People living with disability
- LGBTQIA+ people.

Companies with practitioners from these areas are encouraged to apply.

If your project contains First Nations Content, it will be ineligible if it cannot demonstrate appropriate First Nations consultation and/or participation. Screen NSW does not currently support projects with significant First Nations' content without a member of the key creative team coming from an appropriate background.

Please refer to Screen Australia's guidelines [Pathways & Protocols: a filmmaker's guide to working with Indigenous people, culture and concepts](#).

Assessment criteria

The program is discretionary, and applications will be competitively assessed against the following criteria, subject to availability of funds and the extent to which the application furthers the objectives of the program.

Screen NSW will determine the weighting of assessment criteria, which will then be applied to all applications at the time of assessment.

Applicant Track Record

The track record of the applicant including relevant experience in the game industry and previous credits (if applicable).

Merit of the Opportunity

The strength of your application, considering the opportunities provided by attendance, including:

- The status of game projects in development
- Evidence of adequate planning and capacity to manage the exhibition pod
- The extent to which funding will advance the reputation of the applicant and their project.

NSW Cultural & Economic Benefit

The potential of the market opportunity to contribute to the NSW game industry including:

- A description of how the exhibition opportunity will benefit the work being undertaken by the applicant
- The extent to which financing or sales will result from exhibition activities.

Participation & Diversity

Diversity of the applicant and the project, including whether they increase participation from the NSW Government key priority areas.

Other relevant factors and risks

Other relevant factors and risks may also be considered, as determined by Screen NSW, in its sole discretion, including:

- If they are deemed to not meet [PAX Criteria](#) including their [Safety & Accessibility Guidelines](#).
- Assessment of other factors that may cause applicants to be unsuitable for support, such as any personnel or business activities that could cause reputational or other risk to the NSW Government including if the game is considered exploitative or may harm an individual or group.

Application process

Screen NSW uses the SmartyGrants platform for submission of all applications. Applications made using any other format will not be accepted.

A preview of the application form can be viewed on the [SmartyGrants portal](#).

Note: If you are a new applicant to SmartyGrants, you will need to register and create a password. If you are already registered, you can log in with your existing username and password.

Once your application has been submitted, you will receive an email confirmation from SmartyGrants with an acknowledgement of submission.

Late applications due to technical difficulties will be reviewed and eligibility determined with absolute discretion of Screen NSW, subject to availability of funds. A request for late submission due to technical difficulties must be submitted by email to pdvgames@screen.nsw.gov.au within 60 minutes of the application close time.

If a successful applicant is unable to attend the exhibition, or withdraws from the process, Screen NSW will re-allocate funding to the next eligible applicant (from order of the assessment panel's

evaluation score) who did not receive funding. If no such applicant is available, Screen NSW reserves the right to extend or re-open the program at their absolute discretion.

What to submit in your application

You must submit all core materials listed on the application form, including:

- Profile of the applicant demonstrating their relevant track record
- Statement of intended objectives for attending the event
- Details of the project and a short statement of how attending the event will benefit the project
- Intended plan for exhibition including details on how the exhibition pod will be managed
- A link to the game proposed for exhibition.

Assessment process

Eligibility

Applications will be initially reviewed by Screen NSW program delivery team to ensure they meet eligibility requirements, and all required application information and materials have been submitted and meet our eligibility criteria. If the application is not eligible, you will be advised by email within 7 business days of the program round closing date.

Assessment

After eligibility is confirmed, the application will be first evaluated by at least one Screen NSW staff member based on the published assessment criteria.

After the assessment is completed, the applications will be reviewed by an assessment panel which will include a minimum of one internal (Screen NSW staff member) and a representative from PAX Australia.

Please note that funding allocation follows a competitive process. Evaluations will consider the assessment criteria outlined above, the availability of funds at Screen NSW, the variety and representation of the original IP and the applicant's need for Screen NSW funds.

Screen NSW reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant at any stage of the assessment process to enable an application to be fully assessed against the published eligibility and selection criteria.

At any time during the assessment process, due diligence or other checks on an application may be carried out. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Criminal checks
- Internal conflict checks

- Disclosing information by applicants to us of any material reasonably required by us in respect to the eligibility criteria and selection criteria.

At the completion of the assessment process, the assessment panel will make funding recommendations to the Senior Manager, Content Investment Screen NSW for consideration.

The final decision of successful applications will be approved by the Senior Manager, Content Investment Screen NSW, based on recommendations from the assessment panel.

Application Outcome

Screen NSW aims to turnaround applications approximately 4- 5 weeks from the program closing date. Successful applicants will be notified within 2 weeks of the final decision.

Award process

Successful applications

If the application is successful, you will be sent a Letter of Offer generally within one week of notification. This outlines the conditions of funding and any grant reporting requirements.

Applicants must agree to:

- Display the approved Screen NSW logo within your promotional material and as part of your Pod (physical and/or digital)
- Nominate at least one person to be onsite for the entire exhibition and manage the subsidised pod at PAX Australia. The nominated person must be over 18 and not be a secondary or tertiary student.
- Complete acquittal documentation as reasonably required by Screen NSW.

Successful applicants will be required to enter a contract with Screen NSW confirming agreement to the above requirements and acknowledging that the cost of the pod package will be paid directly to PAX Australia on the applicant's behalf.

Applicants must also enter a contract with PAX Australia to complete their acceptance of the offer.

Publication of grants information

The NSW Government Grants Administration Guide (Guide) requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the funding agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide).

This information is also open access information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the funding awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the funding agreement is executed.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).

Complaint handling, access to information and privacy

Complaint handling, access to information and privacy Details on how Screen NSW handles complaints, access to information and your private information are available [here](#).

Conflict of Interest management

Any conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with NSW Government Grants Administration Guide.

A conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, may be identified if staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- Has a professional, commercial, or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process, or
- Has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation received funding under the program.

If you identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest at any time, you must inform Screen NSW immediately. Screen staff can be contacted by email:

pdvgames@screen.nsw.gov.au.

NSW Government staff, committee members and other officials including the decision maker must declare any conflicts of interest and ensure they are managed according to the Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW Government Sector Employees and the Grants Administration Guide.