



Student Game Development Club Start-Up Guide

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About the International Game Developers Association (IGDA)

The International Game Developers Association is a non-profit professional society that is committed to advancing the careers and enhancing the lives of game developers by connecting members with their peers, promoting professional development, and advocating on issues that affect the developer community. For more information on the IGDA, please visit www.igda.org.

Overview

IGDA student game development clubs serve students of a particular college or university who are interested in game creation and/or a career in game development.

Clubs meet primarily to work on group development projects. Ideally, club members work as teams towards the completion of games for entry into industry contests/festivals.

Additional club activities can enrich students interested in careers in game development (e.g., portfolio reviews, “breaking in” panel discussions, lectures, etc.), while gaining an appreciation and connection to the large game development community.

Students interested in forming IGDA clubs on campus must adhere to the guidelines and policies contained in this guide.

Should you have any questions, please contact the IGDA via [hq @ igda.org](mailto:hq@igda.org)

A - Club Set-Up

Before becoming an official IGDA student game development club, students must follow school protocol for becoming an official student group on campus. Your club will not be recognized as part of the IGDA without prior, official establishment at your college or university.

Please follow these steps:

- 1.) **Determine and follow procedures and policies set forth by your academic institution to officially become a campus organization.** Schools generally require student groups to create a charter, assign a faculty advisor, set a meeting place, etc.
- 2.) **Establish group leadership in accordance with campus rules** (e.g., President, Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster, etc.).
- 3.) **Create your club’s website**, and post upcoming meeting details, past meeting reports, contact information, and other pertinent items. Clubs applying for IGDA recognition must have an organized and up-to-date website for the association to link to from the IGDA student club index page.

- 4.) **Assign an IGDA liaison** to maintain regular contact with the IGDA. This liaison will be listed with your club on the IGDA student club index page. The liaison can be the club President, a committee member, or another assigned volunteer.

- 5.) After meeting campus requirements and becoming an official campus group, your IGDA liaison must **file both an IGDA student game development club application form and provide documentation from your school stating your group is a campus-recognized organization.**

Club recognition form is available online at:

<http://www.igda.org/clubs/start.php>

Fax club documentation to the IGDA at +1-(856)-423-3420.

All submitted materials will be reviewed by IGDA staff. Assuming there are no problems with the submission, the club liaison will be informed of official IGDA student club recognition within two weeks.

A.1 - Naming Conventions

Once approved, clubs can use the IGDA name in their official title. As appropriate, the following conventions should be used:

Short:

IGDA Gotham City University

or

IGDA Gotham City U.

Long:

IGDA Gotham City University Game Development Club

Additionally, clubs can create a “nickname”, or unofficial name, for the club (e.g., “*GCU Super Developers*”).

A.2 - Logo Usage

Once approved, your group may use the IGDA logo on your chapter’s website and other chapter paraphernalia (e.g., club t-shirts, flyers, etc.). The standard IGDA logo can be modified to include the long or short version of the official club title.

The IGDA logo is available in various formats:

http://www.igda.org/newsroom/media_kit.php

A.3 - Advice/Assistance

For member advice on setting up and running an effective club, visit the Student Action Special Interest Group and related resources:

- Student Club Discussion Forum

<http://www.igda.org/Forums/forumdisplay.php?forumid=113>

- Student Action SIG

<http://www.igda.org/students>

- Students Mailing List

http://seven.pairlist.net/mailman/listinfo/student_action

Or, contact the IGDA via [hq @ igda.org](mailto:hq@igda.org).

B - Development Projects

The IGDA requires all clubs to work on game development projects so that students can gain hands-on experience with different aspects of game production: team dynamics and collaboration, deadlines, tools and technologies, etc.

This requirement is fairly broad in that the IGDA is not dictating the scope, number, type, etc. of club projects – nor that they actually need to be completed! It is simply important that club members are getting their “hands dirty”. As such, club projects could include any of the following:

- Complete game/demo from scratch
- Game/demo based on middleware
- Flash/web games
- Mod/total-conversion for an existing game
- Paper/board game mock-ups
- Retro clone games
- Etc.

Depending on the size of your club, you may want to split your membership into several development “teams”. Clubs may consist of multiple projects/teams running at the same time.

Further, students who already have project requirements for class may use them as club projects as well (i.e., students are not expected to double their work load). Conversely, students who are working on club projects should try to get course credit and/or find ways to turn a non-game specific class assignment into game related project (e.g., an IT course on networking becomes a multiplayer game club project, or a multimedia course on interface design becomes a sub-project to design the GUI for the club's game project).

B.1 - Contests and Festivals

Clubs are encouraged to enter their game development projects into contests and festivals. While this is not mandatory, these contests serve as great sources of motivation and can instill the sense of hitting milestones and ship dates. (Plus the potential rewards of actually winning!)

A sample of current (and past) contests and festivals:

- Independent Game Festival

<http://www.igf.com/>

- Slamdance Independent Game Competition

<http://www.slamdance.com/games/>

- GameDev.net Four Elements Contest

<http://www.gamedev.net/community/contest/4e4/>

- Dare to Be Digital

<http://www.daretobedigital.com/>

- Second Life Game Developers' Competition

<http://secondlife.com/gamedev.php>

- Hidden Agenda

<http://www.hiddenagenda.com/>

- Make Something Unreal

<http://www.unrealtournament.com/ut2003/contest.php>

- Casual Game Development Contest

<http://www.gametrust.com/news20.php?pid=news>

C - Additional Club Activities

While most club meetings and activities will naturally focus on group project(s), consider peppering your club's calendar with special events, such as:

- An annual job fair
- Guest speakers from local developers
- Site visits to local studios
- Public student demo/portfolio showcase
- Assist/drive the development of game curricula
- Joint events with a nearby professional IGDA chapter
- Socials, LAN parties, etc.

The structure and frequency of club meetings depend on the type of project(s) your members will work on, as well as the size and commitment of your chapter members.

Clubs have full autonomy to organize and schedule meetings as they see fit, but should gauge what works best for both club members (i.e., does not burden students during finals, vacation, etc.) and development projects (i.e., allows enough time to work on projects).

D - Club Policies

Clubs must adhere to campus rules and guidelines, and maintain good standing with their campus, in order to maintain IGDA club status. In addition to school policies, the following policies apply:

D.1 - Reporting

Club liaisons must provide updates on their group projects and other club activity to the IGDA via mid-semester check-ups (distributed from the IGDA). Failure to do so may result in club revocation.

D.2 - Media Relations

Club leaders may speak with local press regarding club activities, but should not speak to members of the media as a spokesperson for the IGDA. Direct any/all media inquiries to press@igda.org.

D.3 - Membership

IGDA membership is required of all club leaders, but it is not a prerequisite for all meeting attendees.

However, we ask that you encourage your attendees to join the IGDA, as it shows dedicated support for the association and provides special benefits, including eligibility to apply for our annual Game Developers Conference scholarships:

<http://www.igda.org/scholarships/>

Print and distribute IGDA member applications or direct students to the online join page:

http://www.igda.org/join/IGDA_Membership_Application.pdf

<http://www.igda.org/join>

D.4 - Open Doors

While IGDA student game development clubs focus on game development, your club should be open to students from all kinds of disciplines (i.e., not just computer science, multimedia, art). A club can leverage nearly every discipline – from English to business or biology to music, etc, etc.

The same holds true in terms of overall diversity (i.e., age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc).

The club must welcome all those interested in game creation and the game industry.

D.5 - One Club Per School/Campus

Following on from the Open Doors Policy, the IGDA will only endorse and recognize one game development club per school (or campus, if a large school has multiple, geographically dispersed campuses). The role of a club is to serve and welcome all students from a given school/campus.

D.6 - Revocation

The IGDA reserves the right to revoke or withhold IGDA club status at any time if the IGDA believes that the club is conducting itself in an inappropriate manner. IGDA status will also be revoked if the club loses its official status as a school-sanctioned club or organization for whatever reason. This includes, but is not limited to, failure to file status reports, disorderly conduct, and hazing.

E - Resources

Officially recognized IGDA student game development clubs receive the following resources:

- Use of the IGDA name and logo
- Student club index listing (with liaison contact) on IGDA website
- Subscription to Student SIG mailing list (liaisons will be added automatically, but others are welcome to join in on discussions regarding student game development clubs) for more direct communication between coordinators
- General, ongoing guidance/support from IGDA headquarters

Additionally, clubs will gain access to future IGDA and Student SIG resources made especially for student clubs and student club members (e.g., mentor program, speaker bureau, etc).

Please keep an eye on the Student SIG for future updates:

- Student Club Discussion Forum

<http://www.igda.org/Forums/forumdisplay.php?forumid=113>

- Student Action SIG

<http://www.igda.org/students>

- Students Mailing List

http://seven.pairlist.net/mailman/listinfo/student_action

Contact Info

Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. Be sure to keep us posted!

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