



Submission to Inquiry into the Future of Australia's Video Game Development Industry

As a recipient of the original Interactive Games Fund, set up by the then Minister of Arts, Simon Crean, and administered by Screen Australia, I felt it was important to highlight to the inquiry the positive impacts this has had on Tin Man Games over the past 2-3 years.

Tin Man Games was founded six years ago by myself, Neil Rennison, and later joined by Ben Britten Smith. For most of the first three years we were the only employees using a combination of personal investment and Film Victoria loan funding to develop a game engine and a series of apps to sell on Apple's App Store. Later with some more Film Victoria loan funding we were able to expand our business on to Android to sell across Google Play and the Amazon Appstore.

At this time we used a combination of paid contractors/freelancers and contributors who received income from the back-end of projects in the form of royalties. While this was serviceable, we couldn't develop further core technology because we did not have other permanent members of staff to grow our skillsets and develop a company culture. While we were punching above our weight, to take the next step we needed investment.

As recipients of the Interactive Games Fund we received \$300k as part of a grant and \$100k as part of a loan. With our very first payment we were able to move out of our home-based offices and into a permanent location and hired three more staff members. Very quickly this enabled us to work much faster and more effectively, increasing our revenue and be able to further grow our technology, allowing us room to experiment and potentially reach wider audiences. We also had the ability to approach license holders and within a year signed a number of key licenses that further increased revenue and our own visibility in the international gaming development community.

We have now released over 30 titles for multiple platforms and have another 10 or so in development. 13 of those titles are based on our own IP and we have worked on licenses based on Fighting Fantasy, Judge Dredd, Warhammer 40,000, Ryan North's To Be or Not To Be and many more. We have also grown to eight staff members, three of which have joined us with help from Film Victoria's Games Professional Placements scheme.

In short the Interactive Games Fund initiative has been invaluable to our growth as a small games developer. There are many other small teams like us within Australia that would benefit immensely from access to similar monies. Australian games developers have fostered a great amount of success on very limited resources and with the right financial support that success can grow and grow, making Australia one of the leading hubs for game development.

Neil Rennison, Creative Director of Tin Man Games