

Spring 2021

Brains and Games

Competition Guide

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The Competition

Overview

Brains and Games is an international design fiction competition seeking creative ideas for brain-responsive multiplayer games. The Brains and Games Competition (BGC) is open to anyone in the world—including, but not limited to, children, adults, schools, families, youth groups, students, scientists, engineers, and academics.

The BGC has **3 submission categories**:

1. **Brain Games:** Conceptualize and design a future multiplayer game that uses brain-to-brain interaction (BBI) technologies.
2. **VR + Neurotech + Health:** Conceptualize and design a virtual reality (VR) game that uses neurotechnology to improve the health of its users.
3. **Computational Art:** Submit a work of computational art that explores themes surrounding neuroscience, ethics, technology, and consciousness.

About the Organizers

[Brains@Play](#) is an international research collective seeking to enable the responsible design and development of brain-responsive multiplayer experiences through the production of public design workshops, educational resources, and open-source software tools.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Important Dates

February 1st, 2021

9am-11:50am PT

Workshop

A fast-paced online design fiction workshop about creating a digital game employing futuristic brain-to-brain interaction (BBI) technologies. The workshop introduces (a) the concept of speculative design; (b) foresight as a means for exploring alternative futures; and (c) the current state of the art, as well as, the envisioned capabilities of BBI technologies. Also, through a series of engaging and fun creative thinking activities, participants are guided towards the conceptual design of a BBI “game from the future”. The main goals of the workshop include understanding emerging BBI technologies and their potential impact to the (near and distant) future, creative and critical thinking and having fun.

This workshop, led by Dr. Dimitris Grammenos, will begin at 9:00 AM PT on February 1st, 2021 and will last for 100 + 40 (optional) minutes. It will include an introductory presentation, a short break, design exercises, and an (optional) 40-minute working session where teams can develop a rough submission to the Brains and Games Competition.

Note: You may attend this workshop without entering the Brains and Games Competition (BGC). Additionally, participation in this workshop is not required to submit to the Brains and Games Competition. We will record and post the workshop on YouTube as guidance for those who were unable to attend on February 1st.

March 10th, 2021

11:59pm PT

Deadline

All submissions must be submitted via our [web form](#) by 11:59pm PST on March 10th, 2021. Winning teams will be selected by a [panel of experts](#) and notified by March 15th, 2021.

March 20th, 2021

9am-11am PT

Submission Showcase

Winning participants share their submissions during the Brains and Games public showcase for [Brain Awareness Week](#).

May-August, 2021

As Available

Prototyping

Selected participants build working prototypes of their game with mentorship from Brains@Play and the USC Media Arts + Practice Division's [Creative Code Collective](#).

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

The Submission Process

Please enter your submission materials to our [web form](#). Entries must be in English. If under the age of 18, participants must attach a signed [parent/guardian consent form](#) to their submission.

Submission Categories

| Brain Games <i>Only creative ideas required!</i> | VR + Neurotech + Health <i>Prototyping experience required.</i> | Computational Art <i>Prototype required.</i> |
|---|--|--|
| Conceptualize and design a future multiplayer game that uses brain-to-brain interaction (BBI) technologies. | Conceptualize and design a virtual reality (VR) game that uses neurotechnology to improve the health of its users. | Submit a work of computational art that (1) explores themes surrounding neuroscience, ethics, technology, and consciousness, (2) respond to real-time data from 2+ brains, and (3) incorporate at least one other type of user interactivity (e.g. mouse movement, camera, etc). |
| More details here . | More details here . | More details here . |
| <i>Note: If you're uncertain whether your project idea fits into any of these three categories, please reach out to contact@brainsatplay.com. We're open to things we haven't thought of yet!</i> | | |

Scoring Criteria

1. Relevance to the Prize Category (1-10).
2. Creativity and originality (1-10).
3. Documentation and presentation (1-10).
4. Consideration of privacy, data protection and other ethical issues (1-10).
5. Engagement and fun (1-10).

Supplemental Opportunities

At the end of the submission form, all teams are able to express their interest to:

1. Work with the [USC Creative Code Collective](#) to develop a prototype of their game after the competition.
2. Have their submission materials adapted for promotion on the Brains@Play website

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Submission Categories

Brain Games

Sponsored by USC Games

Full Description

Teams of 2-4 participants will conceptualize and design a future multiplayer game that uses brain-to-brain interaction (BBI) technologies.

To apply to the Brain Games category, please submit your answers from the [Brains and Games Design Document](#) to our [web form](#). This will include submission of the following distinct materials:

1. Textual descriptions of key aspects of the game, enriched with sketches and images
2. A cover image
3. A video, up to 3 minutes, that presents and explains the game

Eligibility

This category is open to any and all participants. Only creative ideas required!

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

VR + Neurotech + Health

Sponsored by the USC SMART-VR Center

Full Description

Teams of 2-4 participants will conceptualize and design a virtual reality (VR) game that uses neurotechnology to improve the health of its users.

To apply to the VR + Neurotech + Health category, please submit your answers from the [Brains and Games Design Document](#) to our [web form](#). This will include submission of the following distinct materials:

1. Textual descriptions of key aspects of the game, enriched with sketches and images.
2. A cover image.
3. A video, up to 3 minutes, that presents and explains the game.
4. A description of the team's prior prototyping experience.

Eligibility

Prior prototyping experience must be demonstrated in the submission form.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Computational Art

Sponsored by USC Media Arts + Practice

Full Description

Individuals and groups will submit works of computational art that (1) explores themes surrounding neuroscience, ethics, technology, and consciousness, (2) respond to real-time data from 2+ brains, and (3) incorporate at least one other type of user interactivity (e.g. mouse movement, camera, etc). Submissions should be in the form of a prototype using front-end frameworks (i.e. p5.js, three.js, tone.js, babylon.js, etc) for web graphics, audio, text, social interfaces, or other outputs. Please reference our [p5.js Project Template](#) to integrate the brainsatplay API into your submission.

To apply to the **Computational Art** category, please submit the following items via our [web form](#):

1. A link to the simple sketch or prototype, running in modern browsers
2. Title of the work
3. A description of the work, how it connects with the contest themes, and/or why you created it (no more than 250 words)
4. A description of how you would develop the piece with more time/resources (no more than 250 words).
5. A short bio

Eligibility

Prototype required for submission. People new to creative code are especially encouraged to participate. Resubmissions and iterations of previous work will be accepted.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Awards

Twelve (12) teams will be selected to present at the Brains and Games Showcase (March 20th, 2021).

- The top four (4) teams will be chosen from each of the three Submission Categories. Per category, the top teams will be age-stratified:
 - two (2) teams where the oldest member is aged 18+,
 - one (1) team where the oldest member is aged 13-17, and
 - one (1) team where the oldest member is younger than 12 years of age.
- Stratification will be adjusted if enough meritorious submissions are not available.

These twelve (12) teams will be awarded:

- One 3-pack of Ready-Mades of [The Brain Architecture Game](#) (valued at \$99 - available to ship only to US and Canadian addresses)
- DIY license coupons for [The Brain Architecture Game](#) for each member of the submitting team (valued at \$99 - available to anyone worldwide)
- An annual pass to the Remote Teams Edition of [The Brain Architecture Game](#) for each member of the submitting team (valued at \$99 - available to anyone worldwide).

Additionally, two (2) teams from the competition will be awarded a Grand Prize. Teams must be based in the United States to be eligible for a Grand Prize.

- One team from the **VR + Neurotech + Health** submission category will be awarded mentorship from Brains@Play and \$4000 from the USC SMART-VR Center to develop a functional demo of their game for Fall 2021.
- One team from the **Computational Art** submission category will be awarded a Muse 2 Headband and mentorship from Brains@Play to further develop their game during Summer 2021.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Rules

The Brains and Games Competition (BGC) is organized by [Brains@Play](#). **Entry to the BGC is free.**

Please read these Rules carefully. By participating in the BGC or using the Brains@Play website, you accept and abide by the policies stated below. If you have any questions regarding the BGC, you can send an email at contact@brainsatplay.com.

All participants (or their parent / guardian, if they are under 18 years old) will be required to acknowledge that they have read these Rules and will comply with them before entering into the Competition. If you are a parent or legal guardian agreeing to these rules for the benefit of a child, you are fully responsible for his or her entry in the Competition.

Policies

Eligibility Policy

Anyone in the world may submit to the Brains and Games Competition. If not a legal adult in the country in which you participate in the BGC, participants must attach a signed [parent/guardian consent form](#) to their submission.

Non-recognition prizes can only be guaranteed for participants residing in the United States.

Content Policy

The Brains and Games Competition (BGC) focuses on bringing communities together around collaboration, innovation, and experimentation as they envision a future of brain-responsive multiplayer games. All participants submit their ideas and prototypes through our [web form](#).

Game ideas are uploaded under the [Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 Creative Commons license](#).

This basically means the team that designed the game owns the original content and can do with it as they please—but also that Brains@Play retains an original copy of the submission or prototype that other people can download, modify and distribute for non-commercial purposes.

Brains@Play also reserves the right to remove any uploaded games if the content is offensive or unsuitable. This includes but is not limited to: games with harmful or prejudicial themes related to

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gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, appearance, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, socioeconomic status, or religion. If you see a game being created, or find a game on our site which would violate these terms email contact@brainsatplay.com.

By entering the Competition you, or – if under 18 years old – your parent or guardian, confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, you own all Intellectual Property Rights (“IPRs”) subsisting in your entry to the Competition and that your entry does not infringe any third party’s IPRs.

Judging Policy

All entries will be judged by a [panel of experts](#) in neuroscience, ethics, interactive media, and other fields. Decisions made by the judging panels are final. No correspondence will be entered into. The composition of the panel may vary. The panel reserves the right to disqualify submitted entries at its sole discretion, if considered to be plagiarisms, morally or ethically questionable, and/or offensive – whether intentionally or not.

Winners will be announced on the [Brains and Games Competition website](#) on March 15th and will also be notified via email. The prizes are personal to the winners and non-transferable. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered.

Privacy Policy

Policy for Email Usage

Consent to receiving official communication from Brains@Play is granted by participating in or registering for the Brains and Games Competition BGC). Once collected, your Personally Identifiable Information may be used in a variety of including, but not limited to:

1. Provide service communications such as confirmations, program registrations, and community service messages
2. Respond to your emails or online requests for information
3. Deliver and process surveys
4. Personalize and improve the usability of the website
5. Fulfill and/or deliver prizes from the BGC
6. Tailor content, advertising and marketing to you
7. Share with third parties as required by law

Policy for Submission Usage

By submitting your entry to the Competition, you give permission to [Brains@Play](#) to use the information provided by you in your entry and during your participation in the Competition for the purposes of administering and judging the Competition and any other purpose connected to the

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Competition. This information may be shared with the panel members and anyone involved in the Competition. Additionally, [Brains@Play](#) reserves the right to use the first names and ages of participants in any publicity both in paper and online.

As participants in the competition, you are free at any time and until 10 days after the Competition submission deadline to refuse to participate, or withdraw your participation without any adverse consequences for you and without the need to justify your decision. In this case your personal data will be destroyed.

GDPR Compliance

Personal data—particularly full names and email addresses—are collected for the Brains and Games Competition (BGC) for the purpose of notifying participants of the status of their submission, as well as to properly attribute the owners of the submission. This data will be stored indefinitely and displayed on the Brains@Play website to maintain public attribution of their work.

[Brains@Play](#) is compliant with all legal procedures in respect of personal data processing, as set out in the applicable European and national law, including the General Data Protection Regulation (EU/2016/679). Without prejudice to any exceptions, we would like to inform you that you have the right to access, the right of information, correction, update, blocking and/or erasure of your personal data in accordance with the aforementioned EU Regulation and applicable national laws. In addition, you have the right to file a complaint with the data protection Authority of your country.

For queries related to, or requests to correct or delete your personal data, you may contact contact@brainsatplay.com

Brains@Play Research

Brains@Play will conduct studies and research related to the Brains and Games Competition (BGC). Brains@Play strives to understand and grow public engagement with neurotechnology. We aim to protect the rights, welfare, and well-being of subjects involved in research conducted by Brains@Play and our researchers adhere to strict legal and ethical protocols. Research is primarily conducted with surveys or observation. BGC participants may choose to opt-out of interviews and observation by contacting Brains@Play or by not taking the survey.

Modification

[Brains@Play](#) reserves the change, modify or make exceptions to all policies at will. This includes the right to cancel the Competition at any time; to change the form and substance, dates for deadlines and events, locations or specification of the Competition and/or prizes; or not to award prizes.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Code of Conduct

Adapted from the Global Game Jam Code of Conduct

Purpose

The Brains and Games Competition (BGC) focuses on bringing communities together around collaboration, innovation, and experimentation as they envision a future of brain-responsive multiplayer games. As such, we are committed to providing a friendly, safe, and welcoming environment for all, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ability, appearance, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, socioeconomic status, and faith (or lack thereof).

This code of conduct outlines our guidelines for all those who participate in our community, as well as the consequences for unacceptable behavior. We invite all those who participate in BGC to help us maintain these guidelines and create safe and positive experiences for everyone.

Appropriate Behavior

We wish for BGC participants to exercise consideration and respect in their speech and actions, attempt collaboration before conflict, and refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech. We also expect the same consideration and respect to be applied to games and content created for the BGC.

Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert community leaders and site organizers immediately if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this Code of Conduct, even if they seem inconsequential.

Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behaviors include: intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory or demeaning speech or actions by any participant in our site locations or online community, at all related events and in one-on-one communications carried out in the context of community business.

Harassment includes: harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments related to gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, appearance, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, socioeconomic status, or religion; deliberate intimidation, stalking or following; harassing photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; inappropriate physical contact; and unwelcome sexual attention.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

Anyone asked to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

If a community member engages in unacceptable behavior, Brains@Play may take action to stop the unacceptable behavior, up to and including a temporary ban or permanent expulsion from the Brains@Play community without warning (and without refund in the case of a paid event).

If You Witness or Are Subject to Unacceptable Behavior

If you are subject to or witness unacceptable behavior, or have any other concerns, please report this with an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Addressing Grievances

If you feel you have been falsely or unfairly accused of violating this Code of Conduct, you should notify Brains@Play with a concise description of your grievance.

Scope

We wish for all community participants (contributors, paid or otherwise; sponsors; and other guests) to abide by this Code of Conduct for all Brains@Play events—online and in-person—as well as in all one-on-one or group communications pertaining to community business.

License and Attribution

This Code of Conduct is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license. The original is available at <https://globalgamejam.org/inclusiveness-policy-and-code-conduct>.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

Acknowledgments

Academic Sponsors



The Brains and Games Competition has been generously supported by USC Games, the USC SMART-VR Center, USC Media Arts + Practice, and a USC Annenberg Graduate Fellows Micro Seminar Series Research Grant.

If you have any questions regarding the Competition, you can send an email to contact@brainsatplay.com.

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