

# Nyoma - The Walking Village

## Game Design Document



a game by:



# Introduction

## Short Description

Strange plants that emit toxic pollen are starting to grow all over the land. After fleeing their village, your human tribe climbs onto the back of a gigantic creature, hoping to find a safe place to stay.

While being an entertainment game at its core, “Nyoma” encourages players to reflect on their relationship with their environment, putting them in the role of a parasite living on a much bigger entity. Will you manage to achieve a symbiotic relationship with the gigantic creature? Or will it die under your control, sealing your own fate with it?

## Key Information

Genre: Building Simulation, Survival, Rogue-like

Mode: Single Player with social components

Platform: PC, Mac, Linux (potentially mobile and consoles as a second step)

Controls: Mouse & Keyboard

Engine: Unity

Planned Playtime: endless (5 - 10 hours for campaign mode)

Planned Year of Release: 2021 on Steam Early Access

Monetizing Model: Premium (price point between \$15 - 25)

## Key Features

- Unique setting (first building game set on a living being).
- Survive all the different challenges as you traverse through the various biomes.
- Explore the gigantic creatures back, which consists of a variety of different areas.
- Effectively manage the energy usage of both your human tribe and the creature.
- Research new technologies in order to unlock new energy sources.
- Uncover the mystery why the toxic plants started to grow.
- Procedurally generated maps and challenges to improve replayability.
- Trade resources with other players in game

## Target Audience

“Nyoma - The Walking Village” is a mid-core to hard-core game. We hope to appeal to both male and female players between 14 and 30 years old. Building and base building games tend to be more popular with a male target group, however our setting is quite colorful and the topic of ecology usually appeals very much to a female audience. We believe that thanks to the more serious topic and tone of the game, older players (30+) might be interested as well.

With Nyoma, we also hope to appeal to both target groups of our previous games: Niche (target group mostly female, 9 - 20 years old), Nimbatus (target group mostly male, 14 - 25 years old).

## Similar games / Competitors

Sales estimates based on Steamspy (steamspy.com) numbers:

<b>Banished</b>	Feb 2014 by Shining Rock	3.5 million copies
<b>Frostpunk</b>	April 2018 by 11 bit studios	1.5 million copies
<b>Rimworld</b>	Oct 2018 by Ludeon Studio	1.5 million copies
<b>Kingdoms and Castles</b>	July 2017 by Lion Shield	750k copies
<b>Oxygen Not Included</b>	May 2017 by Klei	750k copies
<b>Flotsam</b>	not yet released by Pajama Llama	-
<b>Dream Engines</b>	not yet released by Suncrash	-
<b>Space Haven</b>	not yet released by Bugbyte	-

## USPs

Compared with similar games Nyoma offers the following unique selling points:

- There has never been a simulation/survival game in this setting (on a living being)
- Multi-layered survival mechanics (both the human tribe and the animal must survive)
- Unique energy management system (also featuring a research system)
- Ecology aspects in game mechanics
- 2D billboards: Rarely ever seen graphics perspective in simulation/building games
- Colorful, hand-drawn visuals (rarely seen in building games)

# Stray Fawn Studio

## Company goals & Team

Stray Fawn Studio is an independent game studio based in Zurich, Switzerland. Stray Fawn was founded three years ago by Micha Stettler and Philomena Schwab and has now grown to 12 members. We mainly focus on the development of PC games, but recently started to venture into the console and mobile market too. We care very much about the personal development of our team members and try our best to help each other grow. Everybody works under the same conditions (same salary, same amount of holidays, ...) and we have a no crunch policy.



From left to right:

<b>David Stettler</b>	Web & Tool Developer	Studying Law at the University of Bern
<b>Stephanie Stutz</b>	Artist	BA Design Scientific Visualization
<b>Arno Justus</b>	Gameplay Programmer	BA Game Design ZHdK
<b>Philomena Schwab</b>	Game Design & Marketing	MA Game Design ZHdK
<b>Micha Stettler</b>	Programmer	BSc Computer Science FHNW
<b>Roger Winzeler</b>	Tech-Artist	Elektroinstallateur EFZ
<b>Max Striebel</b>	Programmer	BA Game Design ZHdK
<b>Annika Rügsegger</b>	Game Design & Artist	BA Game Design ZHdK
<b>Markus Rossé</b>	Animator & Tech-Artist	BA Game Design ZHdK
<b>Claudio Beck</b>	Music & Sound Design	Mixing & Mastering Program at Dubspot NY

## Past successes



250'000 copies sold  
on Steam, Humble, GOG



50'000 copies sold so far  
on Steam Early Access



Total of 300k  
Steam Wishlists



Total of \$150k  
raised on Kickstarter



87% Rating  
on Steam



4/5 Rating  
on GOG



Game Innovation Award



Best Game Design



**Youtube**

**Facebook**

**Twitter**

**Discord**

**Newsletter**

Over 20'000'000 views for videos of our games

Over 7000 likes (studio page + game pages)

Over 9000 followers (studio page + game pages)

Over 3000 members (our game Discords)

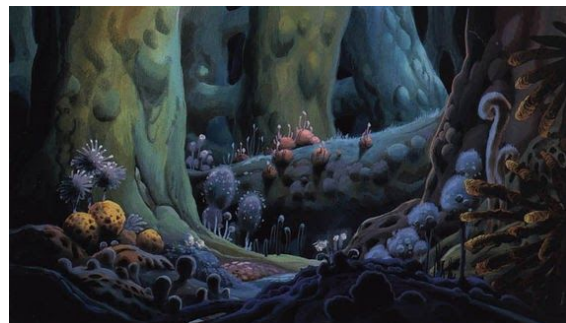
Over 100'000 subscribers



# Game World

## Setting

Nyoma is set in a changing world, similar to ours. Because of an unknown incident, the soil of the planet has been polluted. Within just a few days, mysterious plants spread all over the land, emitting their toxic pollen into the air. Everywhere, humans fled their homes in panic, heading for the sea or onto higher grounds - out of the pollen's reach. Nobody knows how many of them survived and whether or not there is a way to revert the catastrophe and return the world back to normal. The setting of Nyoma is inspired by the Japanese manga/anime "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" which first came out in 1982.



Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind (anime scenes)

## Story Intro

Toxic plants are suddenly starting to grow all over the land. You are the leader of a small human tribe and try desperately to get your people to safety. Within a few days walks of your village there is a hill that might be high enough to escape the plants' dangerous pollen.

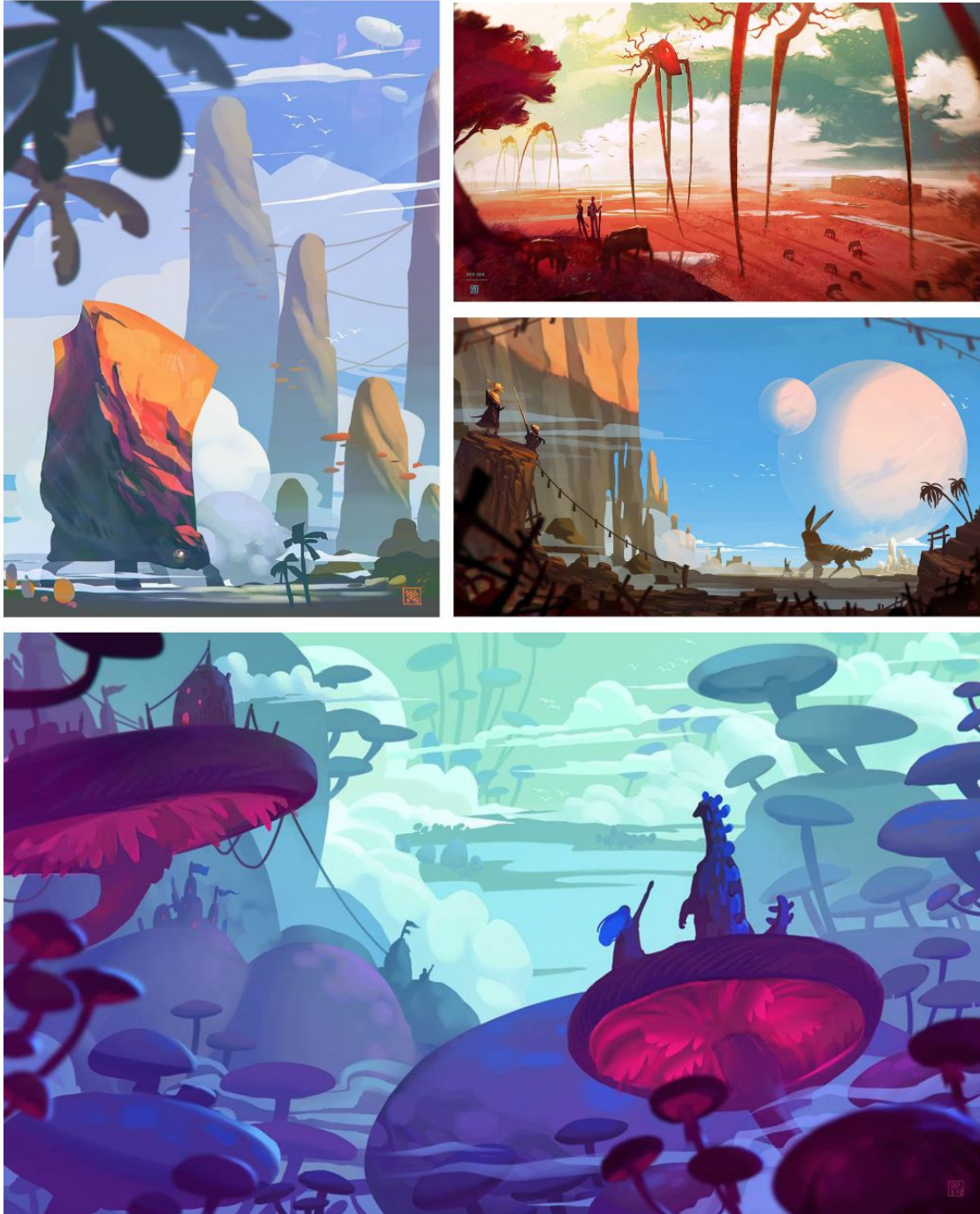
Your people start to cough and try their hardest to push on. But as you reach the foot of the hill, many fall to their knees, poisoned and beyond a chance of rescue.

As you climb onto the hill with your few remaining tribe members, the ground starts to shake, quickly turning into a heavy earthquake. You realize you are standing on the back of a gigantic creature, which has just dug itself out of the earth. It must have lain dormant here, giving the impression of being a hill ever since your tribe remembers. Maybe the toxin is driving the creature from its home too?

Only a few of you are left, stuck on the back of this giant's back. It will be incredibly hard to survive in this new, unknown environment, but it seems to be your only option for now.

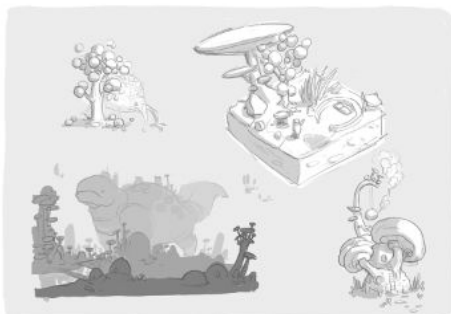
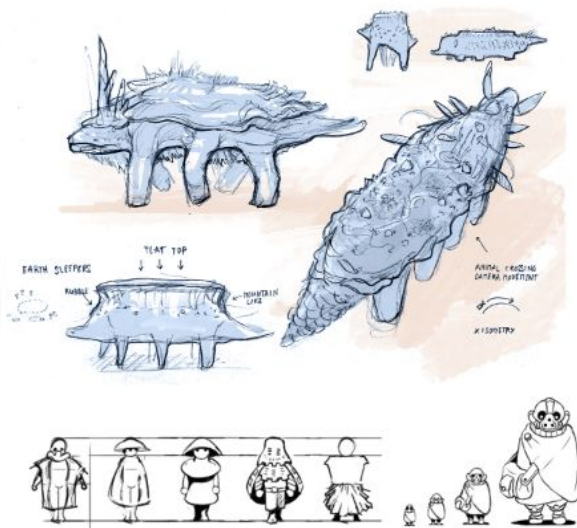
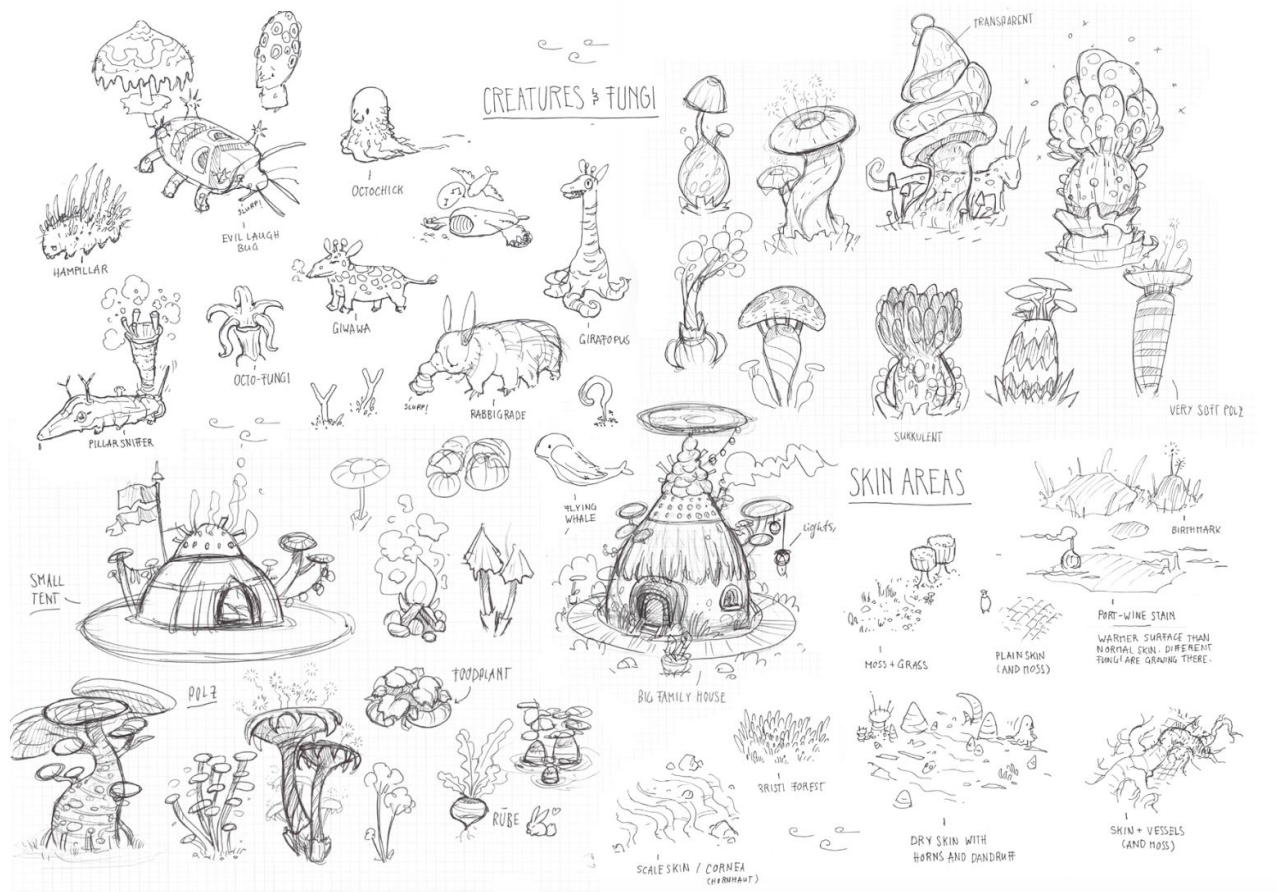
## Graphic style

Nyoma concept art made by the projects' lead artist Stephanie Stutz:





## Various sketches & drafts:





Nyoma is designed in a 2D billboard style inspired by the game “Don’t Starve”. This art style is rarely ever seen in building games, which is strange because it offers a great overview when zoomed out and provides an interesting 3d effect to improve the game’s atmosphere when zoomed in.

One of the biggest challenges in Nyoma’s design is to make it obvious that the player is living on a giant creature, while still trying to make the game look beautiful. Veins, pimples, dry skin and blood are inherently not the most appealing things to look at, so we need to find the right amount of abstraction to recognize them, without being repelled by their appearance too much. Players should feel a bit of disgust from time to time, because of their actions (“Ew, am I actually going to dig a hole into the creatures skin?”) but not because of disgusting visuals. This will also keep the game kids-friendly.

Another challenge are the materials and colors. Since we wanted the environment on the back of the animal to look and feel quite a bit different than the areas on the ground, we went with a completely different color scheme. When humans are building a new tool or structure, such as a tent, we always ask ourselves what materials did they use for this? With this we hope to strengthen the world’s coherence and stay true to the game’s core topic, energy & lifecycles.

Our art style is mostly inspired by the previously mentioned japanese manga/anime “Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind” and the artist Möbius. For structure and textile inspiration, we’re also looking at African and South American native designs.

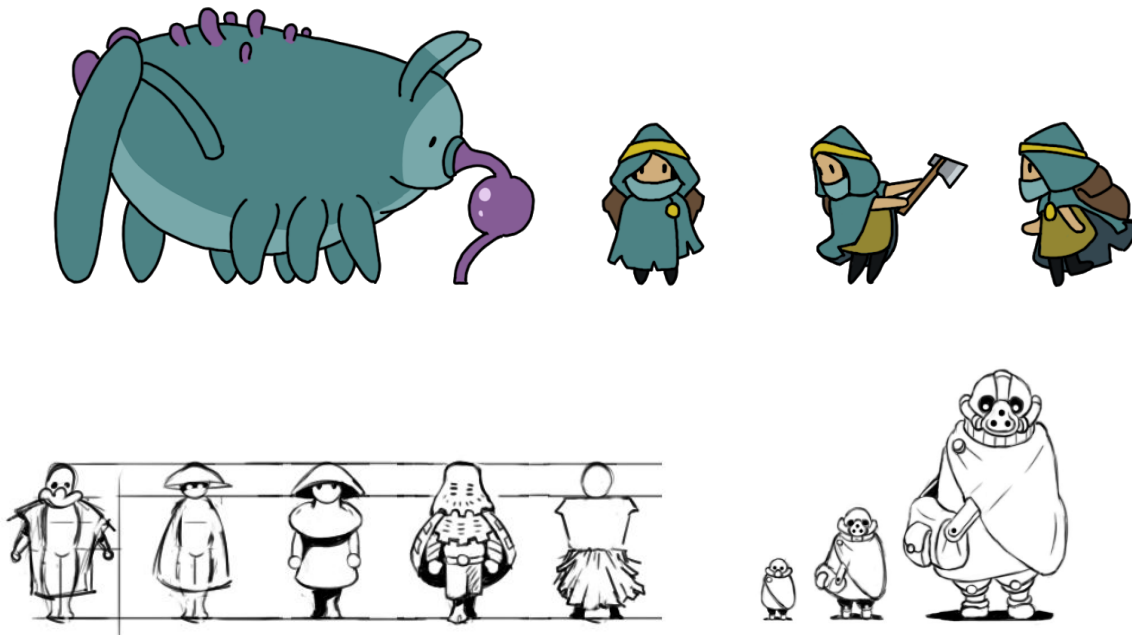


## Character Design & Animation

Our lead animator Markus Rossé is obsessed with hand-animated series and games so we decided to use the technique in our new game Nyoma. One of the biggest challenges was to come up with designs that have just the right amount of detail for the games' 2D billboard perspective. The game allows you to zoom out quite far, so the characters' and their currently performed actions must be readable from a distance. However players can also zoom in and watch the characters go about their business from a closer range and on this level, characters should be able to express emotion.

The humans were designed to look genderless, since there is no needed distinction of sexes in the game. Because of the occasional toxic pollen floating by in the air, they cover mouths. Their cloths in general should give off the impression of a wanderer, ready for all eventualities.

There are various other species, living on the giant animals' back beside humans. These creatures are called "Mammsects" and their design is a mix between mammals and insects. With this approach we hope to combine something normal (mammals) with something alien (giant insects) and achieve a result somewhere in the middle. For example there might be cow or goat Mammsects that can produce milk, but they also look partly like an aphid (which are used by ants to produce a milk-like substance).



## Game World - Core Elements

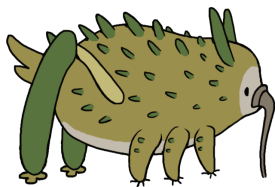


**Human Tribe:** They have been driven from their village by the toxic pollen. Many of them didn't survive the trip, but a few managed to climb onto the giant creatures' back. In order to sustain themselves, they need to harvest materials from the creatures' body (such as horns and fur). The human tribe has very little knowledge at first, but will improve this thanks to researching new technologies and processing methods over time.



**Nyoma - The Gigantic Creature:** Nyoma means "animal" or "wild" in Swahili.

The creature has been sleeping for hundreds of years in the ground, giving off the impression of being a hill. Now that the toxin is spreading, it has risen from its long slumber and started to walk, trying to find a nice spot to lie down again. However, the creature is not adapted to travel long distances in a short time, being used to getting most of its nutrients from the ground. At first, it doesn't even notice the small beings, crawlings onto its back. But soon they start to interact with it, providing the creature with food, enabling it to keep up the pace. Maybe these small beings are different from other parasites the creature encountered so far? Maybe they can actually be helpful?



**Mammsects & Plants:** A strange mix between mammals and insects. They live on the back of the giant creature. Some of them are helpful for the creature, others can be used by the human tribe. But there are also many neutral or even harmful ones. In the end, it all comes down to finding the right balance to co-exist.



# Gameplay

## Goal & Game Over

In Nyoma there is one clear, ever-present goal: Don't die! The game is a rogue-like, so a "game over" means all progress is lost and you start from the beginning. This makes players very invested in all of their decisions and creates tension. However it might be an option to add save games for players who are really not fond of this mechanic (as Rimworld did). In order to avoid gameover, there is only one thing the player must achieve: Keep moving! The giant creature needs to have enough energy so it can keep walking and get away from the toxic pollen. If the creature stays still for too long, the pollen catch up and poison it, gameover.

Alongside survival there is also a bigger goal in the game: Try to find a new place to live in peace. This is a shared goal between the human tribe and the giant creature. And if possible at all, maybe there is even a way to fight back the toxic plants and return the planet to its previous state?

## Gameplay Loop

Nyoma, at its core, is an energy management game. Players need to figure out how to produce energy and transfer it as effectively as possible. First and foremost, the giant creature must gain enough energy to walk away from the toxic pollen, in order to avoid a game over. However, this is only possible if the human tribe is well fed themselves. Here is one possible energy loop:

The humans pump blood from the animal's body and turn it into food. They eat the food and use their energy to gather grass seeds and plant them on the animal's back. Thanks to the energy of the sun and the falling rain, the grass grows big and lush. The humans now use their energy to harvest the grass and transport it to the animal's mouth. The animal digests the grass and gains back a little more energy than the blood sucking has cost it. This newly gained energy can now be used for walking a bit further.

In the current prototype this mechanic is represented by bars for "human tribe energy" and "gigantic creature energy". Little "+" and "-" symbols are flying around to represent the energy flow.

## Progression & Motivation

There is always a clear sense of progress, thanks to the researchable tech-tree and the ever growing village that players are building. As the creature keeps wandering through all kinds of biomes and weather, players adapt with it. Players never know what exactly will happen next (similar to Don't Starve) and therefore are always on their toes, trying to get ready for whatever might await them behind the next hill. Besides the pure motivation to survive just another day, players are also rewarded by little story snippets, giving them insights about why the toxic plants started to grow in the first place and what might be done in order to fix the problem.

## Replayability

Since Nyoma features a lot of procedural generation (similar to our two previous games) there is an inherent amount of replayability. Nyoma is a rogue-like, meaning that if your tribe or the giant creature don't survive, players need to start again from zero. Because of this, the game must be fun to play over and over. We also plan to add different difficulty levels (with some hidden secrets hidden in higher ones) so that experienced players can keep playing and challenge themselves further. One thing that we're trying for the first time with Nyoma are modding tools. These tools enable players to create their own content for the game, which can dramatically increase a game's lifespan (Rimworld and Don't Starve are great examples for this). We had lots of requests for modding tools in our previous games, but if you don't design the game to include them from the start, it is a huge amount of work and code-rewriting to add them in later. So this time we will be prepared!

## Multiplayer Aspects

We plan to add a multiplayer aspect to the game, enabling players to interact with each other, which hopefully will strengthen community building around the game. Trading items is one of the options that we see. This would be an indirect multiplayer feature, meaning that it's not necessary that both players are online at the same time, and has the benefit that we don't need any dedicated servers which can be costly. We have made good experiences with indirect multiplayer features with our game Nimbatus, allowing people to build drones and let them fight against other players' creations, without giving any direct input. Players could then compare their results via leaderboards.

## Controls

Nyoma can be controlled by using only a mouse. A keyboard can be used additionally to control the camera and make use of shortcuts (which are not implemented in the demo).

<b>Move camera</b>	Right Click / Middle Mouse Click and drag (or WASD, or arrow keys)
<b>Select object</b>	Left Click (multiple times on field to cycle through objects)
<b>Deselect field/object</b>	Right Click or Esc
<b>Change game speed</b>	Click on time buttons (top center of the screen)
<b>Open/close pause menu</b>	Esc (multiple times if currently in a selection)
<b>Build furniture</b>	Open furniture menu (bottom left of the screen)
<b>Plant plants</b>	Open plant menu (bottom left of the screen)
<b>Assign work</b>	Open work menu (bottom left of the screen)

# Marketing

## Publishing

As with our first two games, we plan to self-publish again, at least for the desktop. This allows our studio to keep all the revenue (except for platform shares). We will consider working with a publisher specifically for Asian regions (as we're currently doing with our other games) and potentially for platforms that we're less familiar with, such as mobile.

## Strategy - Stepped Development

Making a game of this size is a big financial risk for our studio. If we would simply invest three years in its development and the release would turn out to perform below our expectations, that could mark the end of our venture.

However we adapted a strategy to minimise the risk: **Stepped Development**

Meaning that we will evaluate the game concept and our marketing approach continuously, making sure we're on the right track. To ensure this is the case, we will go through the following steps (as we did with our last two projects) while making the game:

<b>Prototype</b>	Very basic version of the game paired with market research and excessive testing to ensure the game has solid core mechanics.
<b>Kickstarter</b>	Test the market to see if people would pay for such a game and to check whether our marketing approach is working out. Also useful to build up wishlists on Steam for the Early Access launch.
<b>Alpha Launch</b>	Lots of testing with the Kickstarter backers and other players to get to a fun, polished version of the game, but still basic version of the game.
<b>Early Access</b>	Release of the minimal viable product on Steam Early Access. From here on out, the game must be able to self-finance its further development.
<b>Full Launch</b>	Advanced version of the game, including everything that has been promised during the Kickstarter step. If the game is profitable, further updates, DLCs and ports to other platforms (such as mobile and consoles) become an option.



## Strategy - Community

During the development of our two previous games, we integrated players in the development process by involving them in the decision-making process of game features. This has led to the formation of a strong and dedicated fan-base, which we hope to reactivate with our new game. We tried our best to build up channels that allow us to easily reach our players again (forums, newsletter), but also invested time in social media presence:

<b>Stray Fawn Newsletter</b>	Over 100'000 subscribers
<b>Steam</b>	Over 80'000 followers
<b>Stray Fawn Forums</b>	Over 4000 people registered
<b>Facebook</b>	Over 7000 likes (studio page + game pages)
<b>Twitter</b>	Over 9000 followers (studio page + game pages)
<b>Discord</b>	Over 3000 members (our game Discords)

## Stores & Platforms

Since we plan to release an Early Access version, Steam will be our first platform to release on. We usually also set up a Humble store since they simply sell Steam keys and don't cause any extra effort. Once the game gets fully released we might also release it on GOG. We're still investigating the possibility to release our games on the Epic store and WeGame. If the game breaks even on PC, we will consider to port consoles and potentially mobile.

# Development Plan

## Milestones

We're estimating a development time of 2 years until the Steam Early Access release:

<b>Pre-Production</b>	Q1 2019
<b>Production</b>	Q1 2020
<b>Kickstarter</b>	Q3 2020
<b>Early Access Release</b>	Q3 2021
<b>Full Release</b>	Q3 2022

Depending on the game's success on desktop (PC/Mac/Linux), we will evaluate whether or not it makes sense to port the game to consoles and mobile devices. If successful enough, releasing further updates or paid DLCs would be an option as well. Both of these would also be combined with another Kickstarter campaign.

## Financing - Budget Expenses

<b>Fees/Wages author and producer</b>	<b>CHF</b>
Salary team members (author, producer, art, technical, etc.....)	162'000
<b>Overhead expenses</b>	
Office Space .....	12'000
Software Licenses .....	10'000
Accountant.....	7500
<b>Marketing, promotion</b>	
Ads, Events, Promotion.....	10'000
<b>Miscellaneous (specify)</b>	
Various (website, research material, testing devices.....)	5000
<b>&gt; <u>Total expenses: 196'500 CHF</u></b>	

Financing - Budget Receipts

Contributions of depositary

Funds invested by studio..... 176'500

Expected income sale

Kickstarter Funds..... 50'000

Early Access Sales..... 500'000

Full Release Sales..... 500'000

Expected contribution from Pro Helvetia..... 20'000

> Total receipts: 1'246'500 CHF

Kickstarter and sales estimated are based on the release of our previous titles (Niche, Nimbatus).

Thanks & Contact

Thank you very much for considering our application!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us: [info@strayfawnstudio.com](mailto:info@strayfawnstudio.com)



Best regards, The Stray Fawn Team