GLOBAL GAME JAM 2017 *FAQ*

Hostos Community College

WHAT IS A GAME JAM?

"Jam" is a reference to musician jam sessions, not traffic or spreadable fruit.

The goal is to come together and make a video game, or non-digital game like a board game or card game. Participants rapidly prototype game designs and hopefully inject new ideas to help grow the game industry. We share a common theme and constraints. We ask participants to create a game from beginning to end in a prescribed time (maximum of 48 hours). The brief time span is meant to help encourage creative thinking to result in small but innovative and experimental games.

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL GAME JAM®?

The GGJ brings together talented individuals from within your community. It is a unique opportunity for people to push their skills and challenge their way of working. Participants work concurrently with developers around the globe; we rally around a central theme, and then have 48 hours to create a game. It's our hope that we will see some very experimental realized prototypes that you can continue to work on after the jam. Many games developed in previous Game Jams have become fully realized games. The GGJ is open source, hardware & software agnostic and all projects are protected under a Creative Commons license. We encourage people to try out new ideas and push themselves, within reason. We also strongly encourage participants to remember to eat and sleep, to stay at their best!

WHEN IS THE GLOBAL GAME JAM®?

The Global Game Jam® is an annual event. The 2017 GGJ will start at 5pm (in your time zone) on January 20 and goes for ~48 hours through January 22, 2017.

WHAT IS THE OFFICIAL HASHTAG FOR GLOBAL GAME JAM® 2017?

#HostosGGJ AND #GGJ17

IS THERE JUST ONE THEME?

Yes, all locations all over the world share the same theme for the jam.

I WANT TO KNOW THE THEME!

The theme is announced at each local jam site after 5pm local time on Friday. Timezones from New Zealand to Hawaii are all participating. As we aim for all jammers to have the same experience we asked everyone to keep the global theme a secret until the last region (Hawaii) starts. We announce the theme on our website and social media after Hawaii.

For themes from past years, see the Global Game Jam® History.

DO I NEED TO COME TO GGJ WITH A TEAM ALREADY FORMED?

Do not come to the Jam with a team. Everyone will have some time to think and pitch an idea. Collaborate with new friends or peers you admire.

DO I NEED SPECIAL SKILLS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GGJ?

Although having computer skills is helpful, code experience is not necessary. Designers, developers, artists and anyone is welcome to try their hand at making a game during the GGJ. Even if you have no experience at all, you can still participate by contributing ideas, playtesting, and giving moral support to your team.

Global Game Jam® encourages innovation, experimentation and collaboration and encourages both digital and non-digital forms of game making.

IS THE GGJ ONLY FOR PROFESSIONALS?

No. Everyone is welcome.

I AM A PARTICIPANT AT [INSERT LOCAL SITE] DO I NEED TO REGISTER ON THE GLOBAL SITE?

Yes.

WHO OWNS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF GAMES MADE DURING GGJ?

The team/makers of the game hold all IP rights. However, the Global Game Jam® may use the games for demonstration as it sees fit. All games must be posted in the condition they are in as of the close of the GGJ event (Sunday), including both executable and source code (or equivalent). All participants and all games entered for GGJ must agree to a Creative Commons, share, alter, no sell license. Third party tools and software may be used in the projects and need not be uploaded or shared. Clear instructions must be provided as to how to obtain and install any third party software that is necessary for further development.

Please note that creative commons license has been updated to a version 4 since this page was made, so you can either choose the above v3 license or go with this v4 Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 version.

See also: the License and Distribution Agreement.

INCLUSIVENESS POLICY, CODE OF CONDUCT, & FEEDBACK FORM

In addition to Global Game Jam® being fun and collaborative, we also want to keep it safe and open to all. Please review our Inclusiveness Policy and Code of Conduct to learn more about our expectations for the community both online and at jam locations. Any questions, comments, concerns or reports can be sent through the Global Game Jam® Feedback Form.

WHAT SOFTWARE SHOULD I USE TO MAKE A GAME?

You can develop using any tools for any platform that you want. If you don't know where to start, check here for a list of Jammer Resources. The list contains some special deals such as free software downloads for all GGJ participants, and community-made lists of other resources, and is definitely worth checking out!

CAN I MAKE A BOARD GAME, CARD GAME OR OTHER PHYSICAL GAME INSTEAD OF A VIDEO GAME?

Yes! Global Game Jam® does support the making of non-digital games. Talk to your local site organizer. Some hints for how to do this can be found here.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY GAME ACCESSIBLE TO GAMERS WITH DISABILITIES?

Over 20% of gamers have some kind of impairment that may affect their ability to play a game. Avoiding the barriers they face not only means more players, it also makes a real difference to people's quality of life. Independent access to recreation, culture and socialising may not be easily available, and games can provide that.

There are four main types of impairment. Considerations for them range in complexity and not all are appropriate to all game mechanics. but whichever one/s you choose to design for, there's a huge opportunity for innovation, new approaches that haven't been tried before.

Visual (ability to see)

Example conditions: color blindness, glaucoma, myopia

Example considerations: Reinforcing color information with symbol or shape, ensuring large clear visuals and text, audio game with no reliance on visuals

Motor (ability to operate a controller)

Example conditions: RSI, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's

Example considerations: Remappable controls, simple/one button controls, no reliance on precise timing or accurate movement

Hearing (ability to hear)

Example conditions: presbycusis, auditory processing disorder, otosclerosis

Example considerations: Subtitles, separate volume for background/effects/speech, visual representation of important gameplay sounds

Cognitive (ability to understand, remember, process information)

Example conditions: aspergers, dyslexia, global developmental delay

Example considerations: dismiss text on button press rather than a timer, ingame contextual help/guidance, option to turn off all non-interactive elements

For more ideas and inspiration, see the Game Accessibility Guidelines website.

Most importantly though, list all accessibility features on your game's GGJ page, to let players know that your game is suitable for them.