



Submission to ACT 2026-27 Budget Consultation

January 2026



IGEA

interactive games & entertainment association

Introduction

The Interactive Games & Entertainment Association (IGEA) welcomes the opportunity to provide input for the ACT 2026-27 Budget Consultation. Following our previous budget submission,¹ the Canberra Screen & Games Fund had been announced, which marked a major milestone for our industry's advocacy in the ACT. In this submission, we recommend additional considerations that will further support local talent, and harness growth in the ACT video games industry.

About the video games industry

According to industry data, video games generate approximately \$3.8 billion annually in Australia², with Australian-made games contributing \$339.1 million in largely export revenue in the 2023/24 financial year alone,³ highlighting the popularity of Australian-made games to a global audience. Globally, the video games industry is worth more than twice the size of the global film and music industries combined, which our industry is projected to generate nearly US\$190 billion (\$283.5 billion) in revenue in 2025.⁴ Hence, continued investment through the 2026-27 Budget will allow the ACT to capture a larger share of this global market, attracting highly skilled professionals such as programmers, engineers, and AI specialists who are vital to the broader digital economy.

The Australian Government has also recently highlighted our sector's rapid growth, with updated figures from the Bureau of Communications, Arts and Regional Research (released as part of *Revive*, Australia's National Cultural Policy) showing that digital games development has been the fastest growing domain of cultural and creative activity from 2014-15 to 2023-24, averaging 15.9% annual growth and expanding from \$92 million to \$336 million in cultural and creative GDP over the period.⁵

Gratitude for the Canberra Screen & Games Fund

On behalf of the industry, we would like to formally express our sincere gratitude for the launch of the Canberra Screen & Games Fund, a critical initiative that aligns with our previous recommendations to make screen funding more accessible to digital game projects. This fund represents an important building block in the ACT's ongoing commitment to the creative industries, following the more than \$7 million investment in the territory's creative future noted in the previous budget. By specifically backing digital games, the ACT ensures that Canberra remains a competitive hub for game development,

¹ See: <https://igea.net/2025/01/igea-submission-to-act-2025-26-budget-consultation/>

²IGEA, '2024 Australian Video Game Consumer Sales Results' (Media Release, July 2025), <https://igea.net/2025/07/2024-australian-video-game-consumer-sales-results/>

³ IGEA, 'Australian video game development industry stays steady, generating \$339.1 million for the economy' (Media Release, December 2024), <https://igea.net/2024/12/australian-video-game-development-industry-stays-steady-generating-339-1-million-for-the-economy/>

⁴ Newzoo, '2025 Global Games Market Report' (Report, September 2025), <https://newzoo.com/resources/trend-reports/newzoo-global-games-market-report-2025>

⁵ The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, 'Cultural and Creative Activity' (Report, September 2025), <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/research-data/bureau-communications-arts-and-regional-research/arts/cultural-and-creative-activity>

and is effectively nurturing world-class talent and studios such as Blue Manchu, UpperCut Games, and the Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE).

Recommendations for the 2026-27 Budget

To ensure the ACT remains a competitive and thriving hub for game development, we propose the following recommendations:

- **Secure recurring support and future funding increases:** The Canberra Screen & Games Fund has provided much-needed support to the local industry. However, to provide the industry with long-term certainty, it is vital that this support becomes recurring. We recommend that the ACT Government commit to this fund as a permanent fixture of the budget. Furthermore, as the industry grows and more studios look to establish a presence in Canberra, we urge the Government to consider incremental increases in funding in future budget cycles to match the scale of growth of the video games development industry.
- **Address the competitive disadvantage of rebates:** As a territory without a dedicated state-level games tax offset or rebate, the ACT is at a significant disadvantage especially when geographically surrounded by two major states, New South Wales and Victoria, both of which offer 10% incentives for digital games (with other states like Queensland, offering an even more generous rebate of 15%). When combined with the federal Digital Games Tax Offset (DGTO), these states are seeing a surge in growth. Without a comparable local incentive, the ACT faces an increasing risk of losing its local talent and studios to other states that offer a significantly more competitive incentive.
- **Establish dedicated games travel grants:** While artsACT provides travel grants to other creative sectors, there is no equivalent dedicated program for games. As an export-oriented industry with 93% of revenue generated overseas, we recommend the establishment of a games-specific travel grant program to ensure ACT developers can access local and international professional opportunities, and secure major deals from overseas publishers, similar to the support currently provided to other art forms. Our recommendation is that these grants would be administered through Screen Canberra.

We look forward to working closely with the ACT Government to ensure these recent investments drive positive policy outcomes and long-term economic growth for the Canberra community.

For further questions or information about our submission, please contact us at policy@igea.net.

About IGEA

IGEA is the industry association representing and advocating for the video games industry in Australia and New Zealand. Our industry includes the developers, publishers, and distributors of video games, as well as the makers of the most popular video game platforms, consoles and devices.

IGEA has over a hundred members, from emerging independent studios to some of the largest technology companies in the world.

Among our various activities, IGEA also organises the annual Games Connect Asia Pacific (GCAP) conference for Australian game developers and the Australian Game Developer Awards (AGDAs), which celebrate the best Australian-made games each year.

Find out more: www.igea.net

Acknowledgement of Country

IGEA acknowledges and pays respect to the past and present Traditional Custodians and Elders of this land and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We would like to extend our acknowledgments to the indigenous people from countries overseas and recognise their strength, wisdom and creativity.

The logo for IGEA consists of the letters 'IGEA' in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a gradient that transitions from a bright orange at the top to a lighter, yellowish-orange at the bottom.

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