CONTENTS

APHRA KERR

Dr. Aphra Kerr is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Maynooth University, Ireland where she specialises in the sociology of media and technology. She has been researching digital games for almost 20 years and founded, and helps to run, the community website https://gamedevelopers.ie. She is co-principal investigator on the 'Refiguring Innovation in Digital Games' project, and a collaborator of the ADAPT SFI centre for Digital Content Technology. In 2016 she received a Distinguished Scholar award from the international Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA).

She currently serves as an expert adviser to the Pan European Games Information system (PEGI) and is a member of the Media Literacy Ireland network. She has held visiting fellowships at the University of Edinburgh (2019) and the University of Pennsylvania (2011). Aphra's books include Global Games: Production, Circulation and Policy in the Networked Age, Routledge, 2017, and she co-edited The International Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society, Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

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JOSHUA D. SAVAGE

Joshua D. Savage is an Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholar pursuing a PhD in Sociology at Maynooth University, where his work focuses on queer interventions in digital games and governance of online game playing communities. He received the Noma-Reischauer Prize in Japanese Studies from Harvard University in 2003 and has over a decade of teaching experience in Japan, Ireland, and the United States. In addition to Network in Play, Joshua's research work includes contributions to the LGBTQ Video Game Archive, a research project at Temple University's Lew Klein College of Media and Communication; and Taking the Temperature, an LGBT-Positive School evaluation tool developed by the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre at Dublin City University.

Alongside his academic career, Joshua is a professional writer, editor, and designer, and his work appears in digital game projects in North America, Europe, and Asia.

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VICKY TWOMEY-LEE

Vicky Twomey-Lee is a coder, tech event organiser, mentor and advocates for diversity in tech. She's also the Maker Advocate as part of the Dublin Maker team. She has been involved with the tech community for over 10 years, chairing Python Ireland (2005-2016) and its first four Irish Python conferences, running diversity-friendly adult coding workshops, and collaborating with other not-for-profit organisations running workshops and events. She's founded and is involved with groups including Coding Grace, PyLadies Dublin, Women Who Code Dublin, and GameCraft. She's a fellow on the Python Software Foundation, and serves on their grants work group.

Her current role as Maker Advocate (2 year Science Foundation Ireland funded MADE programme) includes knitting together the Maker community, and raising awareness of Make culture in the general public, including outreach to minority groups and social disadvantaged areas as well as corporate outreach.
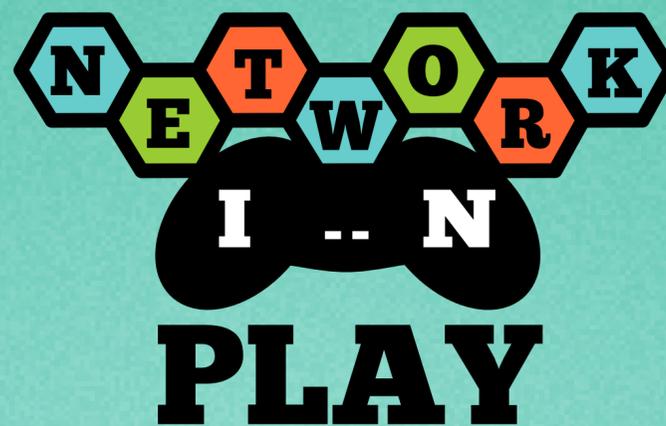
https://about.me/whykay

@whykay

Refiguring Innovation in Games (ReFiG) is a 5-year project supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The Principal Investigator is Professor Jennifer Jenson, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. See http://www.refig.ca/.

Composed of a collective of scholars, community organisers and industry representatives across Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Ireland, ReFiG is committed to promoting diversity and equity in the game industry and culture and effecting real change in a space that has been exclusionary to so many.

The project focuses on 4 areas: game cultures, the games industry, informal learning environments (e.g. community-based incubators, game jams), and formal education (e.g. Degree and certificate programs in game studies and game design).

The goal of the 'Network In Play' (NIP) project is to study and create informal games education and learning events that put equity, inclusion and diversity at the centre. This is an academic research project which directly engages with the wider games community in Ireland.

From 2015-2020 the project was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council in Canada via the ReFiG project.

During this time the project employed a part time research assistant, and partnered with a range of organisations to run industry, community, educational and research activities.

You can see a full list of activities at the end of this report. You can see some of our news and findings on https://gamedevelopers.ie/diversity.

In the future we hope to continue to build our network and collaborate with informal and formal educators, activists and industry representatives who wish to understand and address equity and diversity issues in the games industry and games culture in Ireland.

what is an informal learning event?

Informal learning events are informal in the sense that they are, usually, not formally accredited and are not typically classroom based. In this project they include meetups, hackathons, game jams and workshops.

introduction

This report is an output from the Refiguring Innovation in Games (ReFiG) research project and its Irish sub-project 'Network in Play' (NIP). It is written for professionals, organisations and community groups who organise informal game events and workshops. We hope it will be useful for planning other types of outreach and learning events also.

(1) http://www.refig.ca/

A lot of people volunteer their time to run games, coding and technology events in Ireland. Sometimes they are incorporated into science, arts and other types of public festivals. However, while attending and organising such events over the past decade, we observed that many events were attended by a very narrow demographic: mostly young white males. We were prompted to ask – where is everyone else? What are we doing wrong?

In 2015, the ReFiG project was funded by the Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council to understand and improve diversity and equity in the games industry, education and culture[1]. It involved a large network of academics, students and community groups in Canada, the United States, the UK and Ireland. The NIP sub-project in Ireland focussed on diversity and equity in informal game learning events in Ireland.

The ReFiG project was launched during a time of considerable political and social challenge in North America and the UK. More specifically it coincided with a torrent of online harassment aimed at mostly female and LGBTQ game designers, critics and academics. Some of the targeted individuals were part of the wider research project. These individuals dared to question dominant heteronormative representations, structures and norms within the digital games industry, culture and academia. They dared to ask, "Can we make and study games differently"?

Over the past four years the 'Network in Play' (NIP) project in Ireland has been facilitated by Dr. Aphra Kerr (Maynooth University) and Vicky Twomey-Lee (Coding Grace, PyLadies Dublin, Gamecraft Foundation). Both have extensive experience organising informal community events related to games in Ireland. We have benefited from the research assistance of Joshua D. Savage (Irish Research Council Scholar, PhD student, Maynooth University), and collaborations with a number of educators, supporters and participants. We have also been able to draw upon the experiences of our research collaborators in ReFiG.

The NIP project conducted three key activities. First, we formed a network of people and organisations who were interested in making games more inclusive. Second, we surveyed and studied who attends existing game jam events in Ireland. Third, we organised a series of events and workshops to focus attention on diversity and facilitate game-making for people with little to no experience, or who were unable to attend existing events.

This document summarises our activities and provides an opportunity to share our experiences. It provides a summary of the key issues we faced when planning informal education events for diversity and equity, and concludes with a handy 10-point roadmap for planning inclusive events. We hope you find it a useful addition to your existing resources.

THE DIGITAL GAMES INDUSTRY & DIVERSITY

what is the problem?

While diversity is a key issue in many industries, arguably the videogames or digital games industry faces particular challenges. Even though more and more women are playing digital games, there has not been a commensurate increase in the numbers of women or people from diverse ethnic and racial groups working in the games industry.

The International Game Development Association (IGDA) conducts regular 'Developer Satisfaction' surveys[2] and respondents have noted that the largely homogeneous industry does not offer a welcoming atmosphere to many marginalized people and groups. The 2017 report is based on almost 1,000 responses, primarily from North America. The survey instructed respondents to "consider diversity in terms of demographic characteristics such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc." (2017:11).

The 2017 report notes that while many developers accept that 'diversity' in the workforce, in content and in the industry is a good thing, almost half of respondents had witnessed or experienced inequity[3]. Some said their companies had no diversity or equality policies, and no procedures for formal complaints or disciplinary actions. Respondents also felt that sexism in the industry, and in games specifically, was leading to a negative perception of the industry in society. Additional issues included overwork, unpaid work, crunch, employment volatility, and loss of experienced staff.

salary survey data from North America indicates that core technical roles are overwhelmingly male and the most highly paid in the industry (gamasutra 2014). women primarily work in marketing, production, community management and administration.

surveys in the UK and Ireland also suggest that the industry lacks diversity.

The latest report on the games industry in Ireland, published in 2018, estimates that almost 2,000 full time equivalents are employed, although no demographic information was gathered[4]. Previous research has found low levels of women employed in the Irish industry, particularly in development roles[5]. Indeed, in core development roles in Ireland and the UK the number has remained static or is decreasing (Skillset 2010, Kerr 2012, Kerr and Cawley 2012, Skillset 2013). 2016 data on the games industry in the UK found that less than 20% were women, and 4% from a black, Asian or ethnic minority background.

(2) See https://www.igda.org/page/surveys
(3) See https://igda.org/resources-archive/developer-satisfaction-survey-summary-report-2017/
(4) Report available at https://www.imirt.ie/industryreports
(5) Kerr, A. & Cawley, A. 2012. The spatialisation of the digital games industry: lessons from Ireland. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 18, 398-418.
See also results of a 2012 survey by Jamie McCormick at https://gamedevelopers.ie/the-games-industry-in-ireland-2012/

Industry and trade associations often talk about the 'talent pipeline'. However, the overall demographic profile of the industry would suggest that the industry has both a blocked and a leaky pipeline.

A first step in addressing diversity and inclusion in digital games is to gather demographic statistics on who is studying games, and who is working in the games industry.

A second step is to develop policies to address structural and cultural barriers to participation. We need to address why people are not applying, turning up and staying. Identifying the barriers to entry and the reasons why people leave are critical to addressing the lack of diversity in both games education and the industry.

A further step must be to share information about successful and unsuccessful inclusion initiatives between key stakeholders in digital games and more broadly with the wider technology and creative industries.

why do we need to decode game jams?

From the mid-2000s, game jams emerged as a way for people to experience collaborative game development over a short period of time. One of the first game jams was the Nordic Game Jam, which was founded in 2006 in Copenhagen and runs over one weekend[6]. It provided a template for the development of the Global Game Jam (GGJ), launched by the International Game Development Association in 2008.

The GGJ is an internationally distributed games hackathon that takes place over a 48-hour period. In January 2019, GGJ had 860 locations in 113 countries and 9,010 games were created. This included locations in Ireland. Game jams have their origins in hacking and the open software movement. They have some similarities with the independent music scene (i.e. Jamming). Hackathons and game jams are predicated on the belief that everyone can programme and make games, and that collaborative coding and digital content creation can be empowering.

Game jams have been defined by researchers as 'accelerated' and 'constrained' forms of collaborative game-making (Kultima, 2015)[7].

Attendees must design a game in a pre-defined length of time on a theme that is announced at the start of the day. Research on game jams would suggest that they are a useful way to motivate people to learn content, technical and collaborative skills (Kultima, 2015, Locke et al., 2015).

A range of organisations and people organise game jams (including companies, universities and activists), and they may have a range of goals – from socialising to social change. What they have in common is that they are promoted as spaces for community building, social networking and game-making.

Histories of hacking and gaming cultures have identified that they are dominated by men and are often hostile to women (Jordan and Taylor, 2004). Statistics provided by the largest game jam in the world, the annual Global Game Jam, have found that most participants were males in their twenties and the percentage of women participants was lower than 3% in most cities (Fowler et al., 2013).

If designed carefully, game jams and creative making events can introduce participants to new skills, create a positive collaborative learning experience, and result in some impressive creations in a short period of time. They can provide an important networking opportunity for those seeking to enter formal education and the industry, and social support and community for freelance and part time creative workers.

Done badly, game jams simply reproduce and replicate highly individualist, competitive, temporally intense and 'crunch' like working patterns. They can be unwelcoming and undermine one's creative confidence. While often marketed as 'open to everyone', the structure and organisation of a game jam event often takes for granted, or ignores, the very real financial, social and structural barriers people face when attempting to attend informal learning events.

(6) https://www.nordicgamejam.com/
(7) Kultima, A. 2015. Defining Game Jam. 10th International Conference On The Foundations Of Digital Games. Pacific Grove, CA: FDG.

inspiration

GAMERELLA

GAMERella was designed with the purpose of welcoming women (cis/trans), trans men, non-binary / genderqueer folks, people of colour, those with different abilities, senior citizens and elders, first-time game makers, and any others who may feel they haven't had the chance to make a game.

Montreal, Canada
https://tag.hexagram.ca/gamerella/about/

ALTERCONF

AlterConf was a traveling conference series that provided safe opportunities for marginalized people and those who support them in the tech and gaming industries. By highlighting the powerful voices and positive initiatives of local community members, we built hope and strengthened the community's resolve to create safer spaces for everyone.

Dublin, Ireland
https://www.alterconf.com/conferences/2016/dublin-ireland

DAMES MAKE GAMES

Dames Making Games (DMG) is a not-for-profit videogame arts organization that creates space for marginalized creators to make, play and critique videogames within a cultural context. We teach computing skills for artistic expression, offer production and exhibition facilities, and provide community support for the creation of new artworks.

Toronto, Canada
https://dmg.to/

who attends game jams in ireland?

A number of companies, formal educational institutions and community groups run game jams in Ireland. For our project we focused on events run by an Irish based volunteer-run foundation, GameCraft. We chose this event because it had been running for four years, it had a prevalent Code of Conduct, it focused on creativity, and it was held in various locations in Ireland and abroad.

GameCraft was established in 2012 by two female programmers, and is still predominantly run by one of the female co-founders. It is a registered not-for-profit organisation and runs from 4-8 events on average each year. The first Dublin GameCraft took place in February of 2012 in the Dublin Institute of Technology, with over 120 attendees producing more than 35 games. Since then it has run events all around Ireland, in Northern Ireland, in London and New York. GameCraft uses the tagline 'Connect, Create, Collaborate' and specifically states that no prior game design experience is needed to attend. See https://www.gamecraft.it/events/.

GameCraft events mostly take place at weekends, although sometimes they take place during the working week. The goal of GameCraft is to design a playable game in 10-12 hours (it has since reduced to 8 hours). They provide analogue game-making materials but attendees need to bring their own computers or equipment if making a digital game. GameCraft events often charge a low admission fee (often <€10 to cover lunch and soft drinks)

and attendees must be 18 years of age or older. Attendance can range from 20-120 people. The event has a prominent Code of Conduct and clear reporting procedures.

Over the past four years two researchers from NIP surveyed attendees and conducted participant observation at 3 GameCraft events in Dublin, Limerick and Cork. In addition, the team gathered a range of documents, photographs and resources.

We invited all participants to fill out an online survey and in each location half of attendees filled out the survey. Across the three sites we had 53 responses. These three events were hosted by third level educational institutions and both these institutions, game and IT companies sponsored prizes.

Our surveys largely confirmed our observations of these events: they were primarily attended by white males in their late teens or twenties, a majority of whom were programmers and many of whom were students studying games. Some were part time indie developers. A small number had created and published their own games. Of those that were not studying, most were working at least part time, and most were already working in the IT industry. This profile held true regardless of the location of the event, but was influenced by the attendance of groups of students from third level courses. While some attendees formed teams, most either came with a team or worked on their own.

A majority of attendees at the Dublin and Limerick events were programmers (85% in Dublin, 57% in Limerick), and respondents said they were attending in order to improve game-making skills (92% in Dublin and 93% in Limerick) and to meet others in the Irish games-making community (92% in Dublin and 64% in Limerick).

At the Cork event some of the attendees had to attend for college purposes. At this event over 80% were either game developers or programmers, and over 85% were aged 18-24 years, identified as male and white Irish. Attendees found the events good for networking and learning, or practicing, their skills.

GameCraft events attract those with existing programming and IT skills and enables them to further develop their skills and to build a social network. The profile of attendees at these Irish events was largely in line with the findings of a 2013 survey of GGJ participants which found that participants were 86% male, 56.5% aged 21-29 years and 60% had a college or degree level qualification (Fowler et al., 2013).

We asked attendees about their direct and indirect experiences of harassment and discrimination at games events or in games culture more generally. Over a third of respondents had witnessed or experienced varying levels of discrimination, mostly on the basis of gender. This included sexist comments, verbal abuse or bullying. A small number had direct experience of offensive behaviour at events they had attended. In some cases, the respondents had reported the abuse either verbally or in writing. Respondents also noted the employment of women in 'skimpy costumes' at international industry events.

It is difficult to generalise from these findings given the small size of our sample and the lack of diversity in the attendees at our events. However, we believe they underline the need to attend to identity based forms of distinction when organising informal learning events, and the importance of having reporting and enforcement procedures at all events.

While these digital game-making events are promoted as 'open to all', it is clear that not everyone is attending. They were primarily attracting young males with pre-existing IT knowledge and social and cultural capital. If such events are an important pathway into the industry, if they give attendees a 'head-start', or a 'leg-up', or if they provide a supplementary learning opportunity for those in formal education or employment, they are only really working as a learning opportunity and support for a narrow segment of the population.

In fact, they may be contributing to reinforcing and reproducing the existing gendered and youthful demographic profile of the digital games industry.

furthermore, if game jams are being used as part of science, art or other festivals, organisers need to reflect on how the structure and culture of these events influences who attends them.

co-creating diverse game-making events

We used our findings from these game jam events to co-design with our collaborators a number of community based events. Our approach was inspired by initiatives like 'Dames Making Games' and 'GAMERella' in North America. Partners in the UK had run women only game jams in London and Bristol. We also learned from knowledge sharing with other community groups in Dublin and the AlterConf conference.

Finally, while our research approach was informed by emerging policies around engaged research (IUA, 2016), the pedagogical approach was informed by feminist theories and practice (Pelletier and Johnstone, 2018, hooks, 2014). This means there was a shift in emphasis from discussions about diversity and inclusion to discussions about empowerment, social justice and equality.

We were also keen to introduce the concept of 'intersectionality' to our discussions, and bring queer theories into our work (Harvey and Fisher, 2016, Shaw, 2015, Ruberg and Shaw, 2017). These theories provoke us to go beyond binaries and dichotomies: beyond men and women, beyond formal and informal education, beyond reified conceptions of what constitutes a game. What if we considered queer people from a working class background, or some other combination of marginalised subjectivities? What about the intersections of race, ethnicity and class? During the research project we collaborated with a range of groups to run events including: a Women in the Games Industry event for International Women's Day in 2016, two family half day game design unplugged events as part of the Inspirefest

fringe festival in 2016 and 2017, and two sets of introductory game-making workshops in 2016 in Dublin and in 2018 in Galway. In what follows we will discuss in more detail the outcomes of our female-friendly game-making workshops.

The first decision we had to make with regard to our game-making workshops was about who to target and how to publicise our events. There are numerous women in technology events in Dublin and colleagues in the ReFiG project had run women-only events. However, our collaborators had more experience running female-friendly events and we felt these would welcome queer and trans people and their allies.

We promoted our workshops and events on a range of creative media fora, websites and through word of mouth. To promote accessibility to all groups, we did not charge and we provided all materials and computers. We foregrounded our Code of Conduct in the application process, emphasising standards of behaviour that would be expected of all attendees and providing clear avenues for reporting problematic experiences. Any issues were only acted on if the attendees wished for action to be taken, a provision intended to allow attendees to feel that they maintained agency over the process.

Exit surveys revealed that advertising our event on non-gaming channels was very successful; many who attended had first learned of the

event through notices on mailing lists for visual and creative artists. This was reflected in the skill mix of attendees, which was more diverse than at GameCraft. Attendees included jewellery makers, painters, animators, and graphic designers, in addition to those with programming skills. Word of mouth meant that the numbers of attendees increased over the three workshops, with several new attendees reporting that they had heard about the event from others who had been at previous sessions. Our attention to using inclusive language in recruitment also appeared to be successful. The code of conduct and the language and conduct during the workshops were also met positively and in post-event questionnaires every participant reported feeling welcome and expressed interest in attending more events.

In Spring 2018 we ran another three workshops over successive weekends in Galway and we capped the numbers at 20 for each. Again we succeeded in attracting a diverse and predominantly female identifying set of attendees. To encourage people to turn up, or communicate to us if they were not able to, we charged a nominal €5 fee. Afterwards we donated the money to charity. We found that a nominal fee meant we had more turn-ups and less wasted food. Again we had a majority identifying as female, and a majority aged 25-34 years, with a small number in older age categories. We had some unemployed but a majority were working. On this occasion we asked people about their sexuality.

While a majority identified as straight, we did have people who identified as gay and bi-sexual, and some who did not wish to answer, and some

who felt this was not a diversity issue. Again a majority of attendees were white Irish and had Irish citizenship. On balance we felt we succeeded in attracting many people who were not attending other game-making events; even if we could still do better.

Our board game design and interactive fiction writing workshops in both locations were relatively easy to setup and run. Overall the feedback suggests they were very successful, most people were able to create something meaningful in a half day workshop and some went on to apply some of the techniques they learned in their jobs.

The coding/programming workshops were much more challenging to organise, setup and run. Their outcomes were also much more varied – depending on the space, software, hardware, tutor and participant. They required more time to set up and more tutors and support staff to run the sessions.

Even though they were advertised as for beginners they tended to attract more technically experienced participants and more men. Organising informal, temporary and one-off inclusive learning experiences is highly resource intensive. It is therefore surprising that it is often done by volunteers in their free time. Organising events which focus on game-making software tools introduces even more complications, especially if the events move from venue to venue.

participant feedback on our workshops

Introduction & theory section was really informative.

Name badges would help.

Dublin 2016 (x3)

Excellent hands on course. Well done to all.

Very informative, enjoyed it a lot. Lovely lunch. Looking forward to the next workshop.

Keep it up! I've run some little events and this one showed me it is certainly possible to get a better gender parity!

Hand-outs with bullet points would be more easily followed. Faster computers. Thanks.

Galway 2018 (x3)

Sometimes, because of not being native English, I was not able to understand names. It would be useful to write them on the slides more often.

It was fantastic. The only problem is that there aren't more events running.
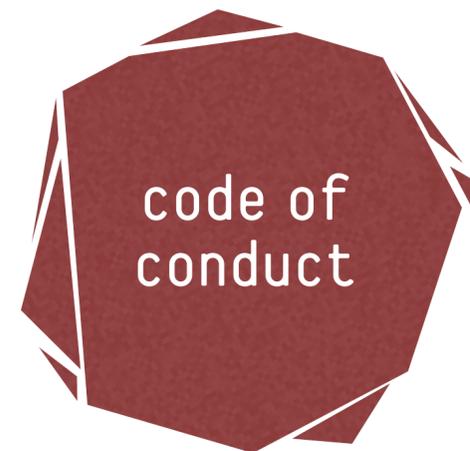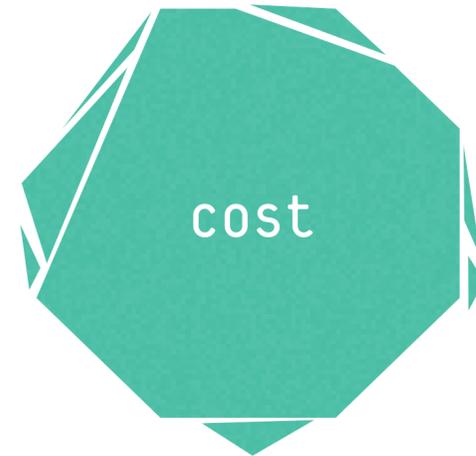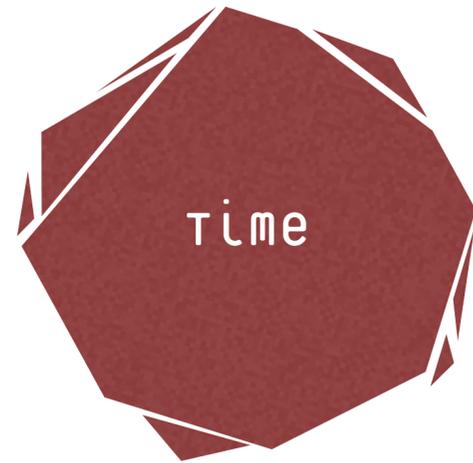
conclusion

It is tempting to reuse the same venues, locations, tools and advertising channels once a pattern has been established. But it is critical to ask – who is turning up to your events? Who is attending your open days, applying to your courses and answering your job advertisements? Is it always the same types of people? And are some people leaving your events halfway through the day, dropping out halfway through a semester, or resigning and leaving their jobs? Who is not 'fitting in'? Publicity and promotion may get people in the door, but structural and cultural changes are often needed to retain people.
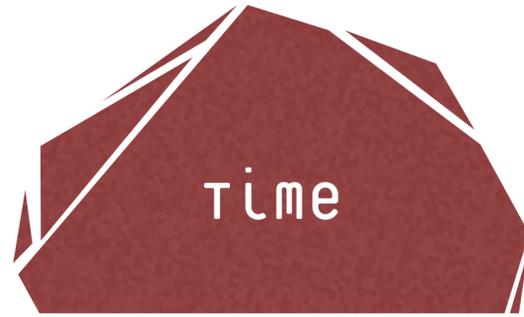
Without careful planning, digital or computer based game-making and playing events may reinforce a relationship between abstract forms of knowledge, certain forms of masculinity, and computers, ultimately undermining the assumption that digital games, game jams and game competitions provide an equal pathway into STEAM education and employment for all. We believe that there are some clear barriers and reasons why many women and people from other marginalised groups are much

less likely to participate in game jams – and we think the lessons are relevant to a wide range of technology events.

In what follows we summarise our findings in a 10 point roadmap. We believe these are key issues to consider when designing a diverse and inclusive game-making (or other type of) event.

our 10 point Roadmap

time

publicity

cost

pedagogy

technology

space

code of conduct

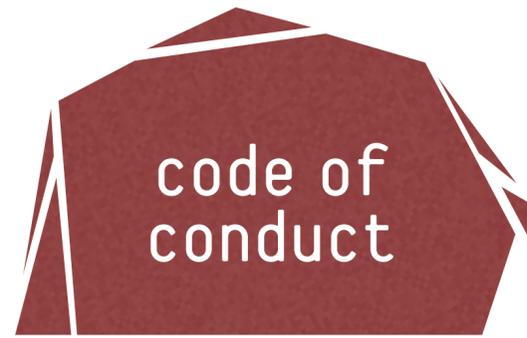organisational labour

knowledge & expertise

culture

time

◆ Full day events or weekend long events exclude many people. Consider making your event a half day, an evening event or break it up over successive weekends.

◆ Allow enough time to properly publicise your event.

◆ Make sure to pace the event carefully.

space

◆ Choose your learning space carefully.

◆ Does it have public transport connections and is it clearly sign-posted?

◆ Are there bicycle racks & parking nearby?

◆ Is it a flexible space, where tables and equipment can move?

◆ Is the room fully accessible to able & disabled persons?

◆ Does it have access to gender neutral bathrooms?

◆ Does the event have to be in Dublin? Or can it be live streamed?

◆ Is there good sound or do you need amplification?

◆ Is the wifi strong enough for a group?

publicity

◆ Word of mouth is a very strong way to publicise your event.

◆ Reach out beyond closed online social media groups to attract a wider set of skills and demographic.

◆ Be careful in how you describe your event. If your event is focused on equity and inclusion – foreground that.

◆ Have a clear registration site and someone designated for communication.

code of conduct

◆ Make it, display it, enforce it.

organisational labour

◆ Try to make the organisational team diverse.

◆ Respect and support the organisers, and if you can pay them.

pedagogy

◆ Try to move away from a 'deficit' approach to learning. The goal should be empowerment and the pace of the workshop and teaching is important.

◆ You might need some ice-breakers. You might need to assist in the formation of teams.

◆ Think about the arrangement of the room. How can you encourage collaboration and participation?

◆ Prepare handouts. Yes, even for technology workshops.

◆ Think about what is being created, as well as how.

◆ Sometimes events offer prizes and awards, but think carefully about any 'winner takes all' type approach.

cost

◆ Make events as low cost as possible. Sometimes charging a nominal fee can encourage people to turn up.

◆ Is it possible to offer child care?

knowledge & expertise

◆ Choose your tutors or guides carefully. They should have both subject expertise and some teaching experience. If they are inexperienced work with them in advance to prepare.

◆ Participants bring knowledge and expertise also. Think about how that can be incorporated into the learning experience. Try to create an atmosphere of mutual respect.

technology

◆ Carefully pre-assess software, hardware and tools to see if they align with your goals.

◆ Do participants need to trade personal data for software access. Is this necessary?

◆ Do not presume that people have, or have access to, the latest computing technology. Provide or rent computer equipment where possible. See if people can work in pairs.

culture

◆ If your event is about equity and inclusion then you need to create a space where all voices are heard, but some might need to be toned down.

◆ Think about how you can support an inclusive culture through food, hot and cold drinks and in language.

◆ Make sure your space is safe and comfortable. Encourage reporting and clearly identify who to report to.

◆ Decide if your event should be women only or female friendly.

◆ Respect people's rights not to be photographed or to have images shared online.

◆ Have name badges.

◆ Have a pronoun policy.

◆ Donate all remaining food or resources to a local charity.

◆ Make sure any 'swag' or gifts for attendees are from organisations who support your values.

Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

Resources
Organising an Inclusive (Game-making) Event

Change Catalyst Inclusive Event Toolkit
http://changecatalyst.co/change-catalyst-tool-kits/change-catalyst-launchvic-inclusive-events-toolkit/

Gamerella
https://tag.hexagram.ca/gamerella/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/06/GAMERella-Inclusive-Jam-Guide-final.pdf

Dames Making Games
https://dmg.to/

ReFig Safer Spaces Policy
http://www.refig.ca/safer-space-policy/

A Vision for Women in Virtual Reality
http://www.refig.ca/safer-space-policy/

Global D&I Knowledge Community
https://vessy.com/community

CoderDojo Accessibility Guide (print & digital)
https://help.coderdojo.com/hc/en-us/articles/360027735491-CoderDojo-Accessibility-Guide

Game-making Tools

Twine
https://twinery.org/
A free open source tool for creating interactive stories and games. Used by artists, activists and indie developers.

Stencyl
http://www.stencyl.com/
A tool for making 2D games without coding.

Fungus
https://madewithfungus.snozbot.com/
A free open source visual scripting tool for creating tools with little to no programming. Created by Snozbot and other community members in Ireland.

Scratch
https://scratch.mit.edu/about/
A free game-making tool from MIT, USA. Designed for ages 8-16 and used in many CoderDojo Ireland clubs.

Unity
https://unity.com/learn
An industry standard 2D and 3D development tool with free educational licenses.

Irish Game-making Organisations & Groups

Irish game makers association (Imirt)
https://www.imirt.ie/

Volunteer run website for Ireland
www.gamedevelopers.ie

Celtic Cardboard (Board game designers in Ireland)
https://celticcardboard.com/

Dublin Unity User Group (DUUG)
https://www.meetup.com/Unity3dDublin/

#IrishGameDev Facebook Group
https://www.facebook.com/groups/370082486348048/

Board Game Designers Ireland Facebook Group
https://www.facebook.com/groups/BoardGameDesignersIreland/

Strawberry Collective Facebook Group
https://www.facebook.com/groups/375003083342726/

Games Music Ireland Facebook Group
https://www.facebook.com/groups/games.music.ireland/

NI Game Dev Network
https://www.facebook.com/groups/
nigamedevnetwork/

Limerick Games Developer Meetup
https://www.meetup.com/Limerick-Games-Developer-
Meetup/

Galway Game Jam
https://galwaygamejam.com/

1GAM Galway
https://1gamgalway.com/

our code of conduct

ReFig and Network in Play is dedicated to providing a harassment-free event experience for everyone.

It is important to have a code of conduct to ensure that events are inclusive, and provide a good experience for everyone involved. It provides clear guidelines to both attendees and facilitators in case something does arise (which we hope doesn't).

Although this list cannot be exhaustive, we explicitly honour diversity in age, culture, ethnicity, genotype, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, neurotype, phenotype, political beliefs, profession, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and subculture.

We do not tolerate harassment of event participants in any form, and we endeavour to provide a safe space for those who are typically marginalized or excluded. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

• Verbal comments that reinforce social structures of domination related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, religion.

• Discouraging others from participating in any activity based upon the individual's perceived gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, or religion, or perceived level of ability, knowledge, or skill.

• Sexual images in public spaces. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any events venue, including presentations.

• Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following

• Harassing photography or recording. Please ask for permission to photograph events esp. attendees.

• Sustained disruption of talks or other events

• Inappropriate physical contact

• Unwelcome sexual attention

• Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behaviour

Reporting

If someone makes you or anyone else feel unsafe or unwelcome, please report it as soon as possible.

Harassment and other code of conduct violations reduce the value of our event for everyone. We want you to be happy at our event.

People like you make our event a better place.

You can make a report either personally or anonymously.

ANONYMOUS REPORT

You can make an anonymous report here: [add your link]

We can't follow up an anonymous report with you directly, but we will fully investigate it and take whatever action is necessary to prevent a recurrence.

PERSONAL REPORT

You can make a personal report by:

• Calling or messaging the phone number given at the beginning of the event

• This phone number will be continuously monitored for the duration of the event

• Contacting a staff member

When taking a personal report, our staff will ensure you are safe and cannot be overheard. They may involve other event staff to ensure your report is managed properly. Once safe, we'll ask you to tell us about what happened. This can be upsetting, but we'll handle it as respectfully as possible, and you can bring someone to support you. You won't be asked to confront anyone and we won't tell anyone who you are.

Our team will be happy to help you contact venue security, local law enforcement, local support services, provide escorts, or otherwise assist you to feel safe for the duration of the event. We value your attendance.

• Email address for organisers: [add emails]

• Emergency services – [add numbers]

enforcement

Participants asked to stop any harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately.

If a participant engages in harassing behaviour, event organisers retain the right to take any actions to keep the event a welcoming environment for all participants. This includes warning the offender or expulsion from the event.

Event organisers may take action to redress anything designed to, or with the clear impact of, disrupting the event or making the environment hostile for any participants.

We expect participants to follow these rules at all event venues and event-related social activities. We think people should follow these rules outside event activities too!
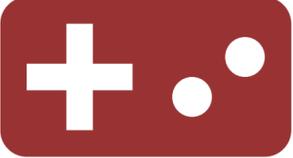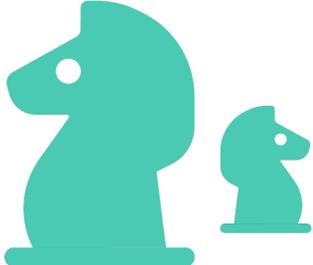
NOTES

This anti-harassment policy is based on the example policy from the Geek Feminism wiki, created by the Ada Initiative and other volunteers. It is also informed by the ReFig Safer Spaces Policy. See http://www.refig.ca/safer-space-policy/

Timeline of NIP activities, research & outputs (2016-2020)

15 Academic talks

2 community events

6 Informal Adult game-making workshops
👥 62

2 Informal family game-making unplugged events
👥 50

4 Industry talks

3 Research at game jam events
👥 86

3 Blog posts

2 Academic publications

1 Report

2016

We conducted an online survey and field research at two day long GameCrafts in Dublin and Limerick in February 2016.

53 (*27 filled out our survey*)

We organised a women in the games industry event for International Women's Day in March, 2016. Six women gave ten minute talks on their experiences working in design, music, programming, network operations and quality assurance in the games industry in Ireland. The event was supported by Digit Game Studios and DogPatch Labs in Dublin.

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We collaborated with Coding Grace to run a half day game design unplugged event for families in July in Merrion Square Dublin. This was run as part of the fringe festival of Inspirefest in Dublin, an international technology and design conference with a focus on diversity and inclusion (see http://inspirefest.com/).

50

Two of our team volunteered at AlterConf in August when it came to Dublin (see (https://www.alterconf.com/). AlterConf is a travelling conference that 'provides safe opportunities for marginalised people' in the technology and games industries.

We co-developed a code of conduct and made it available online at https://gamedevelopers.ie/diversity/refig-nip-code-of-conduct/

In August and Sept. 2016 we organised 3 free 'diversity friendly' workshops on board game design, interactive fiction writing and programming for games, in collaboration with Coding Grace, Pulse College and Dogpatch Labs, (all Dublin). Publicity was provided by Silicon Republic and other online partners.

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Presented at the 'Games and Representation' seminar organised by Diane Carr from the Institute of Education, London, May, 2016. Funded by ReFiG.

Presented at 'The Practices and Politics of Inclusivity in Games', a co-hosted workshop of the MeCCSa Women's Media Studies Network and ReFIG. Hosted by the University of Leicester, UK, Sept., 2016.

Presented at 'Level Unlocked: facilitating women's access to careers in the games industry' workshop. Workshop organised by Helen Kennedy (University of Brighton) and Sarah Atkinson (King's College London), October 2016. Part of Play 2016, an Arts and Humanities festival at King's College London.

Presented at the ReFiG annual conference in Montreal, Canada.

SAVAGE, J. D. & KERR, A. 2016. 'The Diversity Game.' Blog post on Gamedevelopers.ie, June. See https://gamedevelopers.ie/the-diversity-game/

2017

Presented at 'State of Play', in the Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin, April, 2017.

Presented at Women in Tech, Google EMEA HQ, Dublin, April, 2017.

Workshop - Kings college, London, May 2017.

Co-organised, half day family game design unplugged event at Inspirefest, 8th July 2017, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin.

Presented at the Galway Games Gathering, GMIT, Galway, Sept., 2017.

Engaged Research Talk and poster, Maynooth University's Research Week, 19-26 Oct., 2017, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

2018

Presented as part of a ReFiG panel, Media Industries Conference, King's College London, 18-20 April, 2018.

Presented at the 'Thinking Gender Justice' conference, University College Dublin, 24 May 2018.

Organised 3 workshops on board game design, interactive fiction writing and programming for games with Unity, in collaboration with partners Coding Grace, PorterShed and Galway Technology Centre, April, 2018.

👥 33

Presented at the 'ReFiG 4.0: Places and Spaces' annual conference, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, 25-27th October.

Presented (remotely) 2nd International Digital Games Research Conference, IRIB, Iran, 29-30th November 2018.

2019

Survey and field research at GameCraft, Cork. Fri Mar 22, 2019.

Presented at the Irish Game Based Learning conference (iGBL), 28 June 2019, Cork, Ireland.

Presented at the Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) annual conference, Japan, August, 2019.

Presented at the European Sociological Association biannual conference, Manchester, UK, 20-23rd August, 2019.

Presented at the 'ReFiG 5.0 Reflect and Reboot' conference event, OCAD, Toronto, Canada, 7-9th Nov. 2019.

Presented at the EventProfs Dublin meet-up, 21st Nov., 2019.

2020

Decoding and Recoding Game-Making Events for Diversity, Inclusion & Innovation. Aphra Kerr, Joshua D. Savage & Vicky Twomey-Lee. Maynooth: Maynooth University. Available from gamedevelopers.ie/diversity.

Decoding and Recoding Game-Making Events for Diversity, Inclusion & Innovation. Aphra Kerr, Vicky Twomey-Lee, & Joshua D. Savage. gamedevelopers.ie/diversity

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