

# Video Games Early Stage Growth

Guidelines 2025/26



**CREATIVE  
BC**



**BRITISH  
COLUMBIA**

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## Video Games Early Stage Growth 2025/26

This pilot program supports new video game companies establishing their foothold in the market, providing them with a strategic boost to enhance their prospects for long-term success.

Eligible applicants must represent a company with no more than one shipped game. Proposals must be business-focused with plans for ongoing content production and capacity building. These plans must be achievable, appropriately resourced, and structured to obtain the best economic outcomes from public funding. Financial support will be non-repayable.

**Maximum request per application:** up to \$50,000

**Overall Program Funding Available:** \$300,000

**Decision Process:** Competitive, determined by an external advisory panel.

**Deadline to Apply:** October 27, 2025, 11:59 PM PDT

### Aims + Objectives

- Support B.C.-owned and -controlled companies developing their own creative IP.
- Help new companies enter and expand into the market and build for long-term growth and sustainability.

### Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following requirements to apply:

- Be a for-profit company incorporated in British Columbia or Canada with its head office in British Columbia. Companies extra-provincially registered in B.C. are not eligible. Applicants who are not yet incorporated may still apply, but must incorporate if selected for funding.
- Be Canadian-owned as defined in the Investment Canada Act and Canadian-controlled as determined for the purposes of Sections 26 to 28 of the Investment Canada Act.
- The majority of the common interest voting shares of the company must be held by B.C. residents, defined as either a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident who has resided in B.C. for at least 200 of the 365 days prior to application and have filed income tax returns in B.C. for the taxation year prior to the application.
- Applicants and any related or associated parties must be in good standing with Creative BC.

### Funding Eligibility

This program is designed for companies with titles in development, and/or no more than one released title (i.e. commercial titles made available for purchase or download through various game publishing platforms). Companies with two or more titles are eligible to apply for the Video Games Business Development program. If a company qualifies for both programs (see VGBD guidelines), it may only access funding from one Video Games development program per intake year.

If you are uncertain about your eligibility, please contact Nicholas Klassen at [nklassen@creativebc.com](mailto:nklassen@creativebc.com).

## Eligible Costs

At least 75% of total costs must be spent on goods and services sourced from within British Columbia (i.e. paid to B.C.-based individuals, companies, or entities).

### Eligible costs include but are not limited to:

- Promotion and marketing
- User acquisition strategies
- Labour and personnel
- Technology, content and design
- Expenses required to put content online or to create applications, including copyright clearance, documentation, design and development
- Technical and administrative expenses
- Travel costs (i.e. accommodation, airfare, per diem) to a maximum of 10% of the total allocation
- Legal, accounting, or other consulting fees
- Activities to open foreign markets
- Playtesting for QA and usability

### Ineligible Costs:

The following are **not** eligible:

- Any expenses, activity or phase of work that are already directly supported by another Creative BC program
- Capital projects such as the purchase, renovation or improvement of land and buildings
- Working capital replenishment, repayment of loans or debt, operating deficits, capital losses and capital buybacks.
- Any expenses related to the production of content that is not 100% owned and controlled/optioned (or intended to be optioned should the application be successful), by the applicant for a minimum of 12 months.

## Application Procedure

Applicants will need to complete an online application that includes:

- Business Development Plan (max. four pages) with a clear emphasis on how the requested funding will make a measurable difference to the company's current activities, whether it be significantly accelerating timelines or increasing the scale, quality, or reach of the work. The plan should also cover company vision and growth plan, plans for fostering talent and diversity, and contributions to the growth of the games industry in BC
- Company information, including shareholders and directors
- Presentation Deck (max. 10 pages) and links to video materials (trailer or video of demo/prototype) that can include released work and/or projects in development. The document will serve as a combined creative portfolio, production snapshot, and pitch deck that includes some or all of the following elements: genre positioning, visual assets, narrative/worldbuilding elements, core gameplay loop and any unique mechanics, technical achievement, production approach, target audience and market positioning (including any player feedback, follower counts,

Discord, etc.), project scope and roadmap, etc. Do not submit installation files or executable builds.

- Information on key team members: Owner/Executive management, Producer, Executive Producer, Director (including Technical Director, Creative Director, Art Director, and Interactive Director), Senior Programmer, Designer, and Narrative Designer.
- Proposed budget for the activities in the plan.
- Additional financing (if applicable).

A full checklist is available on the Creative BC [website](#) to guide you through the application process.

Applicants are limited to a single submission per company for each annual intake round.

The application portal will open for submissions September 11, 2025.

Applications are due by October 27, at 11:59 PM PST.

## Evaluation + Selection

It is expected to take at least nine weeks from the application close date to evaluate all applications.

The following criteria will be evaluated:

- Company profile
- Clarity of Funding Request details (objectives, needs, and expected outcomes) and potential for positive impact on the video game sector in B.C.
- Creative quality and originality of the company's project(s)
- Market potential and commercial viability

See the Evaluation Matrix on the Creative BC [website](#) for a full breakdown.

## Eligibility Review

An initial review for eligibility and missing documentation will be conducted by Creative BC staff. If documentation is missing, applicants will be informed and given a short period (maximum five days) to submit outstanding materials. Following this, incomplete or ineligible applications will be withdrawn with notification.

## Advisory Panel

The competitive review will involve Creative BC staff as well as an advisory panel comprised of external industry professionals who represent a variety of backgrounds and relevant areas of expertise. Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the application materials, any advisory members will be carefully vetted for conflict of interest.

All decisions will be confirmed via email. When an application is unsuccessful, a brief explanation can be provided upon request. Please note that all funding decisions are final.

## Contracting and Drawdowns

Creative BC reserves the right to provide a reduced commitment from the requested funding. Companies awarded funding are subject to a contract which will include a timeline, payment schedule and specific deliverables, according to the specifics of the business development plan. Generally, it will include two

drawdown payments, plus an interim report. A completion date will be noted in the contract by which all deliverables should be submitted.

## Terms of Funding

### Advance of Funds

The advance of funds (the “Advance”) is non recoupable (except as noted below under Forfeiture and Default and within the Agreement) and will be released over two drawdowns (80% and 20% of the Advance, respectively), according to the conditions laid out in the Agreement.

### Respectful Workplace + Client and Partner Code of Conduct

As a catalyst for, and investor in B.C.’s creative industries, Creative BC is committed to supporting a healthy ecosystem that thrives in a culture of mutual respect, dignity and inclusivity that is free from any form of harassment, discrimination, and violence. All companies that work with, or seek funding from, Creative BC are expected to adhere to [Creative BC’s Code of Conduct for Clients, Partners, and Stakeholders](#), implement policies and procedures for a harassment-free workplace, and comply with relevant laws. Creative BC is a signatory of the [Creative Industries Code](#) and expects all applicants, recipients, and partners to also adhere to this Code of Conduct. [Learn more](#).

### Forfeiture and Default

A completion date is noted on the Agreement by which all deliverables will be submitted. Should all materials not be provided by the completion date, the eligible applicant forfeits any outstanding drawdown amounts and the commitment will be reduced by this amount.

Should an eligible applicant be placed in default- according to the terms of the Agreement, this limits the applicant, its principals and any parent or subsidiary companies from accessing further funding from Creative BC. In addition, Creative BC reserves the right to request immediate repayment of any funds advanced.

## Inclusivity in Games

Creative BC urges applicants to use the Canada Media Fund’s [Inclusive Games Report](#) as a tool to help create greater inclusion in the Canadian Video Game industry. The report makes the case for rethinking and adopting inclusive practices not just as a moral principle, but as a profitable economic initiative that can help reach new audiences and optimize workforce productivity.

## Questions?

Make sure to review the FAQ and Application Checklist on our [website](#). If you still have any questions about eligibility, or require additional support to submit your application, please contact:

### Nicholas Klassen

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### Heather Campbell

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