Game Developers Conference 2013
Taylor Yust
Basic Info

• Game Developers Conference primarily attracts, strangely enough, game developers

• But not just developers: journalists, educators, government employees, investors, various industries (ex: aircraft industry), students, and gaming enthusiasts of all kinds

• Size and scope is ENORMOUS!! SigCSE (1,200) vs. GDC (23,000)

• One week, structured as a series of tutorials, workshops, and summits for the first two days, various lectures and seminars for the other three days
State Machines
Behavior Trees
A*
Occupancy Maps

http://youtu.be/wraeNbodjn0?t=21s
http://youtu.be/GqrG73tskLo?t=11s

Tuesday, April 9, 13
NSF Grant

- Commercially viable but high risk
- Promote STEM
- Two Phases: $150,000 for six months, $1,000,000 for two years

- How is the project unique?
- Potential competitors
- Explain risks - risky is GOOD (more on that below)
- Explain and prove how your team is qualified for high-level, professional game development
**Technical Objects**

Must be able to describe the technical aspects of the innovation (hardware and software). They don't want some generic game that any developer could have made. You have to be specific about access to necessary resources. Include timelines, graphs, and charts that demonstrate you understand the challenges of game development and can actually deliver.
Commercial Aspects

• Exhaustive survey of existing market
• Specific, narrow desired outcomes
• Statistically valid assessment plan
• MUST be able to make money and be commercial (do your research!)
Business Plan

• DO NOT make overstated claims. (It's not going to change the world, but you should have a specific, identified outcome.)

• Document actual potential client base

• Be specific about how to reach them

• Pricing model should be realistic

• How are you protecting IP/copyright for innovation? (These are the sorts of things academics don't consider and are key to the commercial aspect of the grant. To prove you're serious, apply for patents, trademarks, etc., and point them out in the proposal.)
Other Materials

• Academic/business citations

• Bios of team members (to demonstrate that your team can actually make a professional game)

• Budget

• Other means of support -- Show that others are actually interested in funding the project and having it succeed (for example, letters from schools, businesses, or other potential customers pledging that this is a needed project [and why], and that they would purchase the product if it existed)
Why So Many Fail

• Poorly researched and prepared
• Lack true innovation
• Downplay risk
• Fail to specify outcomes
• Fail to realistically describe the market
• Reflect poorly on our field as a whole
Want to be a game developer?

- Then make games! **MOST IMPORTANT!!!**
- Game Design degrees, or even any degree in general, less important than experience/portfolio
- Maps, mods, even reviews or blogs help!
Universities can provide the resources and environment to take projects from this...
...to this.
Or from this...
...to this.
http://youtu.be/X9YaFY8S75M?t=4m54s
• Website
• Portfolio
• Facebook
• Twitter

http://www.tayloryust.com/

http://www.muffinsparticus.com/
So let’s clarify something...

“A degree is a piece of paper that says you can do something in theory - game developers want to know that you have enough passion to do real work, regardless of whether you’re being graded on it.”

Derek Yu
“Making it in Indie Games: Starter Guide”
gamasutra.com
"This isn’t to dissuade you from going to college, per se (I studied computer science in college, and while it was far from a perfect experience, I also gained a lot from both the curriculum and the friends I made there). The point is **make something** - games, mods, art, and music. If school helps you with that, great. If it doesn’t, then you need to rethink how you’re spending your most valuable resources: time and money (both of which can be exorbitant costs for schooling)."

Derek Yu

“Making it in Indie Games: Starter Guide”

[gamasutra.com](http://gamasutra.com)
“The most important thing to know about video game development and schooling is that no one, whether it’s an indie studio or big company, cares about degrees. How could it, when some of its most prominent members are drop-outs or never-beens? John Carmack, Cliff Bleszinski, Jonathan Blow, and Team Meat are all prominent members of this club.”

Derek Yu

“Making it in Indie Games: Starter Guide”
gamasutra.com