

# manifesto



Games Industry  
Manifesto For The  
Next Parliament  
**08/2014**

# Games Industry Manifesto For The Next Parliament

- + Supporting growth
- + Promoting UK games industry abroad
- + A strong and diverse talent pipeline

With games tax relief in place, we now have the chance to put the UK back at the top of the global leader board for games. To make the most of this opportunity we will need the right support from the next government, working hand in hand with industry. At the centre of the thriving technology, media and content sectors, our industry offers a blueprint for the future of the digital economy. Following the recommendations set out here will not just benefit the games industry; it will help build a growing future-focused economy for the 21st century.

The potential of our industry is vast. The global market for games was worth \$75.5bn in 2013<sup>1</sup>, which is more than film and music combined<sup>2</sup>. The market is predicted to reach \$102.9bn by 2017<sup>1</sup>. The UK's biggest selling entertainment product was a game in 2012 and 2013<sup>3</sup>, and a game is the world's fastest-selling entertainment product of all time<sup>4</sup>. A forthcoming Ukie/Nesta report will show that official figures underestimate the UK games industry, with our contribution to GDP likely to pass £1bn and a primary workforce of over 15,000.

With this plan we can greatly increase the huge UK economic potential behind those numbers. Government investment to date has generated a strong return: at three tradeshow in 2013/14 where Ukie was the official partner, for every £1 that UKTI spent, £263 of potential business was generated for a UK games company. We believe that this is just the beginning.

## Introduction

In order to reach this potential, we are asking the Government to give us the infrastructure to make more games and interactive entertainment; to help us to sell them around the world; and ensure we have the talent coming through to continue growing for the long term.

Underlying all this is the need for games to be recognised as an important part of modern British culture, enjoyed by an ever-growing share of the population, as well as a vital source of future growth, jobs and exports.

We recognise that the next Government will need a strong evidence base to support the measures we make below, if we are to create the best conditions for this growth. Ukie is currently working with Nesta to build a 'living map' of the UK games industry, which we see as an essential tool for understanding the industry and its future success. This will show the patterns of growth and provide evidence of where further policy intervention is needed, and the commercial rewards that intervention will deliver.



Cover image  
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## Supporting growth

Responsible Departments: BIS; DCMS; Treasury; DCLG (LEPs)

Games Tax Relief creates the foundation for more investment. We now want even greater partnership between the Government and industry to focus on wider infrastructure issues to support growth. Existing public agencies for the creative industries should be given a clear remit to support games.

- + **Regulatory Stability:** Defend the UK's reputation as a great place to do business by keeping business regulation, internet governance and consumer rights stable. Ensure there is a proportionate enforcement regime for IP via programmes such as Follow The Money and long-term funding to PIPCU.
- + **Support UK businesses:** Develop UK-led programmes to encourage further investment in UK games businesses. Create a long term roadmap where industry can access public funding and support proportionate to the other screen industries in order to build business resilience, protect our games heritage, support new and innovative content, and to spotlight emerging creative talent on a global stage.
- + **Connectivity:** Set a long-term ambition for the UK to have the best B2B and B2C infrastructure in the world, particularly for fixed and mobile broadband. Define a separate strategy for improving business internet connections, recognising the importance of latency and resilience as much as download speed. Ensure an open internet through proportionate regulation.
- + **Investment:** Work with Ukie to ensure that government finance schemes like the British Business Bank work for games businesses; and to improve the process of collection and communication of investor-friendly data on games companies. Look again at regulation of crowdfunding platforms.
- + **Jobs all around the country:** Support the creation of a living map of the games industry, to track the growth of industry clusters, based on the Ukie/Nesta cluster map; support affordable work spaces and initial funding to help start-ups grow.

## Promoting UK games industry abroad

Responsible Departments: UKTI; BIS; FCO; IPO

UKTI's Sector Advisory Group has agreed a comprehensive International Strategy for the Creative Industries. This must be implemented in a way that fully benefits the UK games industry.

- + **Global Engagement:** Fund, fully support and work with industry on at least two trade missions focused on interactive entertainment and games every year to high value markets. Increase UKTI funding available for games in the Tradeshow Access Programme for other international expo access for SMEs. Create long-lasting relationships with UK talent abroad and channels for distribution or commissioning in key emerging territories.
- + **Games Export Fund:** Create a Games Export Fund to support a wide range of activities, such as promoting new British talent and new technology in reaching global markets.
- + **Support IP-rich exporters:** Create a memorandum of understanding between UKTI and the IPO to ensure they work to promote IP-rich exporters, including games companies, and expand on the successful IP attaché model.
- + **Inward Investment:** Give existing screen industry agencies a formal duty to promote the UK as the best place in the world to make games, both nationally and for specific regions.

## Games are a central part of modern culture and are played by people of all ages

- + 80% of 11-14 year olds play games<sup>5</sup>
- + 55% of the UK population play games – 34.7 million people<sup>6</sup>
- + 45% of all players in the UK are female<sup>5</sup>
- + 43% of parents play games with their children<sup>7</sup>

## A strong and diverse talent pipeline

Responsible Departments: DfE; DCMS; BIS

We need to give the UK the strongest skills base for computer games in the world, which is why Ukie worked across industry to get the recommendations of the 2011 Next Gen report accepted. We support Nesta's Schools' Digital Pledge to ensure that the curriculum brings together art, design, technology and computing, so that young people are able to enjoy greater opportunities to work creatively with technology, both in and out of school.

We fundamentally believe that the future strength of the UK games industry rests on our ability to inspire, recruit and promote people from diverse backgrounds.

- + **Support new Computing curriculum:** Address the teacher deficit in Computing by investing in CPD and initial teacher training, as recommended by UKFORCE and others, and extend Ukie's London Digital School-house programme around the country. Set a new target for recruitment and training of Computing Teachers over the next Parliament.
- + **Invest in careers guidance:** Leverage industry expertise via Video Games Ambassadors to inform schools careers advice to highlight routes through to new jobs in hi-tech professions.
- + **Extend and make permanent the Skills Investment Fund:** Deliver a new plan for the fund for 2015 and beyond. Re-define the criteria and process for accessing funds to make it simpler for games companies to access.
- + **Reinvigorate Creative Skillset Accreditation of university games courses:** Recognise and support higher education courses which best prepare students to join the games industry. Aim to have a number of the UK's higher education games-related courses recognised as amongst the best in the world, in terms of education quality and vocational relevance.
- + **Set ambitious targets for apprenticeships:** Work with industry to set a target for apprenticeship numbers over the next five years as part of expected job growth.
- + **High-skilled immigration:** Provide a smoother visa process for high-skilled creative and technology workers, and ensure SMEs and start-ups are not disadvantaged by the system.

## Next Steps

- + In the coming months, Ukie will produce a series of white papers detailing how the above priorities can be implemented by the next government.
- + We will engage with parliamentarians from all political parties to spread understanding of our industry and to build agreement with our proposals.
- + We will continue to listen to members and the broader interactive entertainment industry.

Please note: A separate paper covers Ukie's mission outside of policy intervention.

### References

1. Newzoo
2. Combined MPAA and IFPI figures
3. Entertainment Retailers Association
4. Guinness World Records
5. GameTrack (ISFE/Ipsos MediaCT), Q1 2014
6. Newzoo UK Games Market infographic, December 2013
7. ISFE, Videogames in Europe 2012 Consumer Study

### Find out more

- + For more information contact Ukie Public Affairs & Policy Officer **Andy Tomlinson** ([andy@ukie.org.uk](mailto:andy@ukie.org.uk))
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