

GAME DEVS OF COLOR

# 2025 Impact Report



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“GDoCExpo is doing **the best and most effective work** in changing this industry and the lives of marginalised people in it. They changed my life in so many ways.”

*– Community Member*

# 2025 Executive Summary

**Game Devs of Color was founded to address a simple but urgent concern: the global game community is diverse, but the game industry is not.**

Marginalized creators face persistent barriers to access, visibility, and funding. We build community and create pathways for creators of color to be seen and advance their careers.

In 2025, we hosted the 10th annual GDExpo, our online-first global conference, and delivered showcases, grants, scholarships, and new initiatives, impacting people at hundreds of game studios worldwide.

Amid industry layoffs and reduced capital, we serve as essential infrastructure, directing resources to creators historically excluded from the games ecosystem.

Thank you for supporting our mission. We're so excited to build on this momentum in 2026.

*- Game Devs of Color, Inc.*



expanded our flagship programs

**1200+**

conference attendees, plus  
14 in-person Watch Parties

supported creators directly

**\$34K+**

awarded in grants,  
scholarships, and microgrants

grew our reach for participants

**1M+**

online showcase visitors  
across our digital events

built our platform for devs

**300+**

games and studios featured  
and supported worldwide

# About Game Devs of Color

**Our mission is to  
amplify the creative  
power held by people of  
color in games.**

We do this by organizing revolutionary events, uniting our vibrant community, and building access to knowledge, funding, and opportunities.

Creators of color make great games but are often pushed to the margins. We fight to create a better games industry that is intersectional and equitable.

**GAME DEVS OF COLOR**

our values: how we show up for our community

#### **Solidarity**

We stand together with our community, advocating for inclusion and justice. We are anti-racist and anti-oppression.

#### **Resilience**

We adapt, persist, and grow sustainably. We do it the right way, with no labor exploitation, and with internal culture that endures.

#### **Care**

We center empathy and support, building a safe and valuable community. We create space where people of color can feel comfortable and grow.

#### **Celebration**

We honor achievements, creativity, and joy. We uplift creators and bring them up with us.

# Why this work matters

## Games are a cultural force and the fastest-growing medium today.

Over 3 billion people play games and half of Gen Z ranks games as their top media. Yet marginalized creators are underrepresented in the game industry. 83% of Black teens play games, but only 2% of creators are Black. Similar gaps exist across many communities of color, limiting who gets to create, lead, and benefit. We exist to change that.

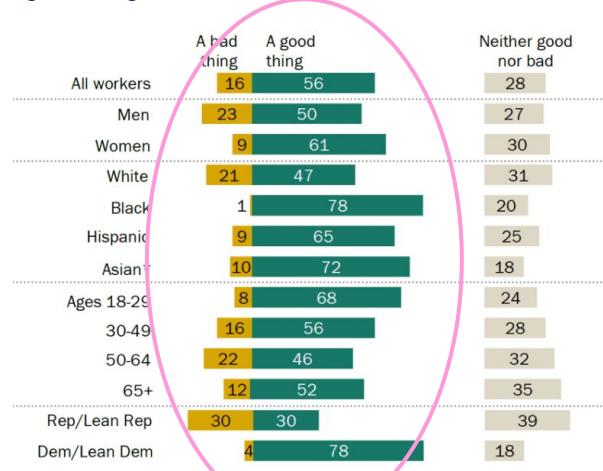
### Why does it matter?

**Representation.** Seeing oneself in games shapes identity, belonging, and aspiration.

**Industry outcomes.** Diverse and inclusive teams produce stronger creative and business results.

**Human connection.** Community support networks provide the care and growth that industry alone cannot.

Even across demographic lines, most people say that increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion at work is mainly a good thing.



Pew Research Center

"I learned that I could keep my fierce politics, center my work in justice, and **be unapologetic** about it, but also **learn the skills** and be around folks who are both **talented** and **hard working**. I don't need to feel alone, and I can take **strength** and **inspiration** from others to do my game dev work and feel empowered to do so, and to support others as well."

- GDoCExpo Attendee, 2025

# How we do the work

**We remove barriers so creators of color can participate, be seen, and be valued.**

## Access

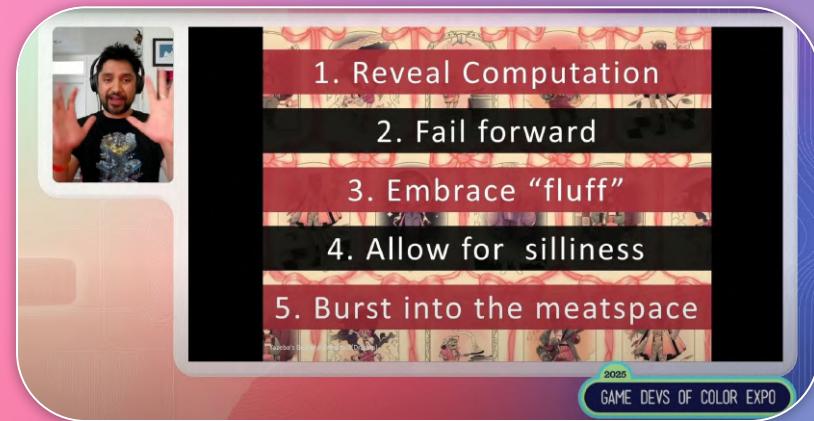
- Online-first removes geographic & physical barriers
- Sliding-scale ticketing ensures economic accessibility
- Free video archive makes expert knowledge accessible
- Scholarships create peer cohorts and opportunities

## Opportunity

- Platforms for showcasing games to wider audiences
- Career advancement and visibility
- Grant programs for no-strings development funding

## Equity

- No developer fees to submit or showcase
- No exploitation of unpaid labor; all speakers and contributors are paid for their time and expertise



we are equity-forward

**100%**

of speakers and contributors  
are compensated

we are developer-first

**\$0**

in developer  
fees charged

**“GDoCExo has established itself as a top platform for professionals to network and share ideas.**

Game production is a difficult and grueling process ...  
creators should have access to a support network that can  
help them get through the roughest times.”

*—Paste Magazine*

# All-time impact

**What began as a single event has grown into a global platform supporting creators at every stage.**

building access to knowledge, funding, and opportunities

**10**

**annual conferences**  
(+6 global events)

**\$450K+**

**grants awarded**  
to emerging creators

**\$40K+**

**financial support**  
to scholars

**\$115K+**

**conference passes**  
for scholars

connecting creators and amplifying impact globally

**4M+**

**visitors to our game**  
showcases

**450+**

**expert speakers and mentors**  
sharing knowledge

**1000+**

**studios featured**  
and supported

# Our Community & Reach

# Our Community

**We unite a global network of game creators from diverse backgrounds and regions.**

global speaker & game submissions

**75+**

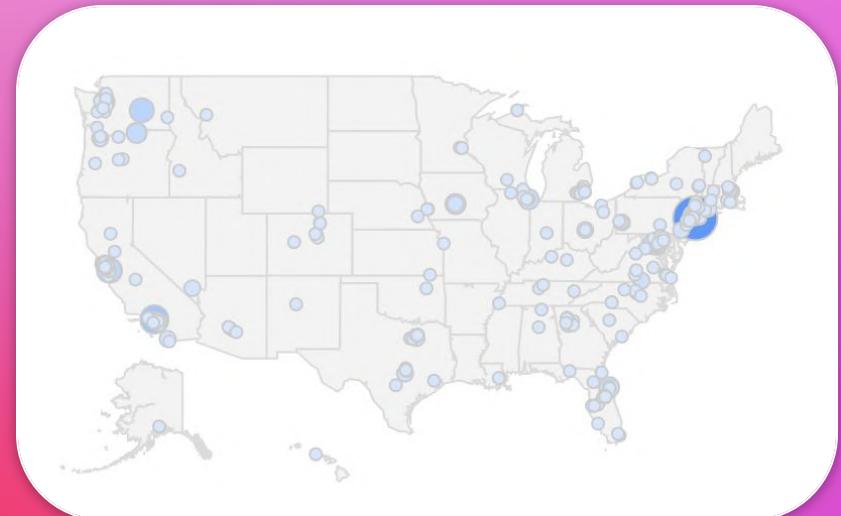
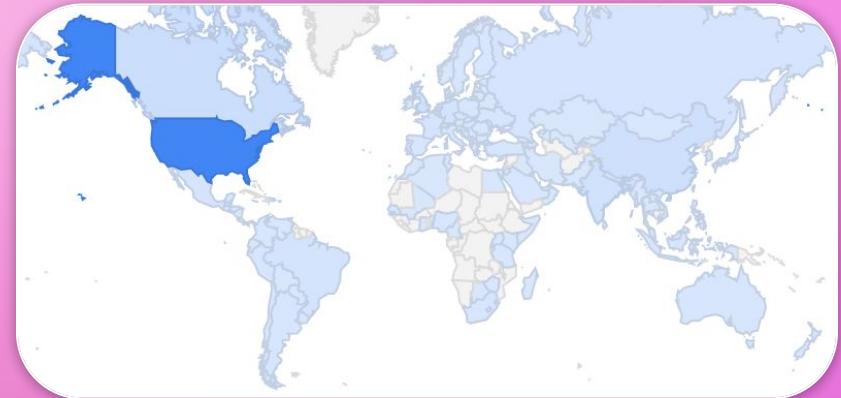
countries represented  
across every inhabited continent

## Studios & Organizations

AA-AAA Studios • Indie • Publishers • Mobile • XR • Tech •  
Academic Programs • Nonprofit Organizations • Media

## Roles & Disciplines

Design • Art • Engineering • Production • UI/UX • Audio • Business •  
Narrative • QA • Community Management • Founders • Content



# Audience Demographics

## Identity

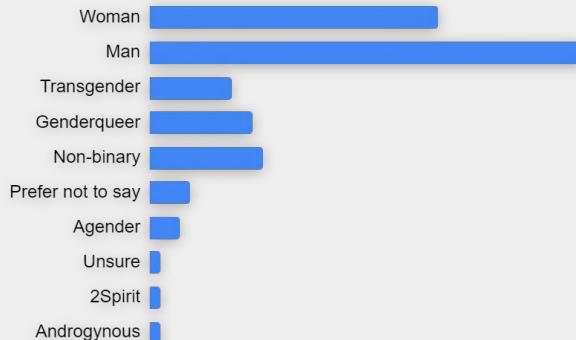
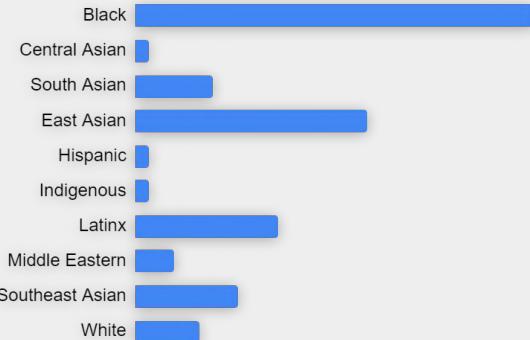
**80%** are **people of color**  
(100% of speakers and devs are poc)

**50%** are **gender-diverse**  
(women, non-binary, genderqueer, agender, etc.)

## Profession

**55%** are **senior-level or higher**  
(Senior, Lead, Principal, Director, Executive)

**70%** work on **design, programming, or art**  
(followed by production, UI/UX, marketing, audio)



# Community Engagement

our community of game professionals of color is growing

**1200+**

creators & industry professionals  
attending our flagship conference

**500+**

active devs of color in our  
private community server

our content is valuable to creators

**170K**

video views on talks  
from our archive

our audience is highly engaged

**96K**

newsletter deliveries

**31.3%**

open rate  
(above industry average)

**7.6%**

click-to-open rate  
(above industry average)

people talk about our events

**1.8M**

estimated views based on audience  
reach and engagement rate on socials

# Game Devs of Color Expo

# Game Devs of Color Expo

**GDoCE**xpo is our annual online conference and game showcases centering devs of color.

It's our flagship program, recognized as a gold standard in developer-first community. GDoCExpo includes:

- **World-class online conference** with talks, panels, and dev interviews
- **Online Social & Community Demo Night** for live interaction via spatial video chat
- **In-person Watch Parties** connecting local communities
- **GDoCExpo Direct & Steam Sale** spotlighting new and upcoming games
- **Grant Awards** close out the week-long celebration



## HOOK aka Light up their eyes!

- 1-2 sentences you'll give to capture their attention.
- Doesn't have to be hyper-specific
- Think of some of your fave games and what their hooks were
- Experiment! Your hook WILL evolve as you practice explaining your game to folks.



### Some of mine?

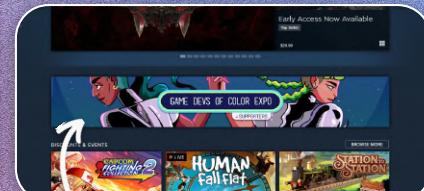
"F\*cked up Florence"

"Date all the objects in your house!"

"Take care of and guide spirits into the afterlife"

2025

GAME DEVS OF COLOR EXPO



Front page of Steam

# GDoCExpo Program Format

**Our conference prioritizes accessibility, quality, and community.**

## Online-first

An online-first experience unites our community across geographic and economic barriers, giving the broadest reach for participants.

## Accessibility & Inclusion

We design for accessibility across attendees, speakers, and devs. This includes closed captions, professional moderation, free access when needed, no dev fees, and no unpaid labor.

## Quality Production

Dedicated technical support, coaching, slide review, and moderated sessions ensures a high-quality speaking experience.

knowledge-sharing platform

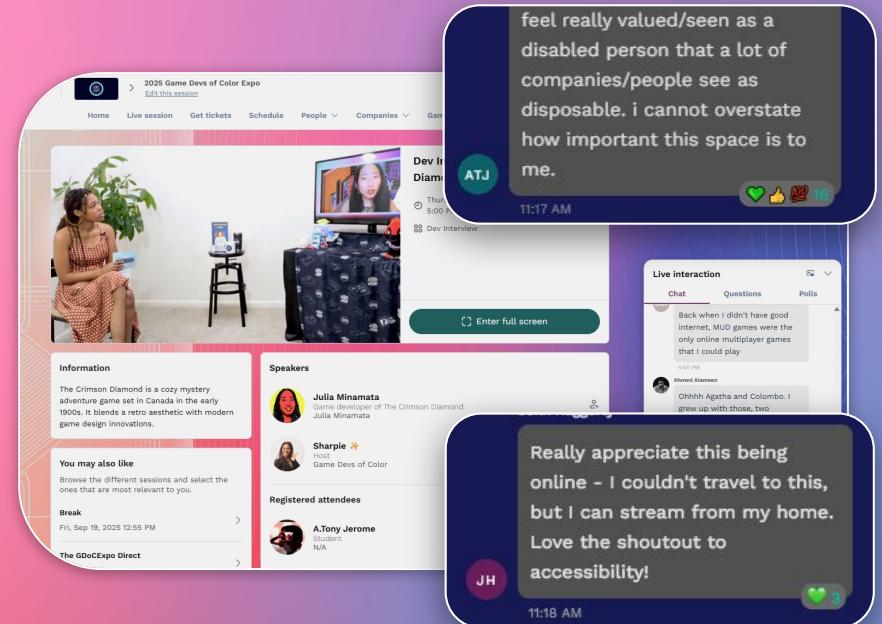
**50+**

speakers and panelists  
across ~40 sessions

community at scale

**300+**

participating game studios  
in our 2025 showcases



**“I love how **accessible** this event is, how we can be part of it from **anywhere** in the world, how all videos have **captions**, and that we can rewatch them as many times as we wish.”**

– GDoCExpo Attendee, 2025

# Spotlight: Notable Sessions

Expert-led talks on craft, leadership, and professional growth.

We provide a platform for expert knowledge sharing.

GDoCExo only features **experienced creators** speaking on their **professional expertise**; there are no tokenized “diversity 101” panels here. All speakers are compensated.

“The most worthwhile panels I attended had both great insight and great speakers. I learned a LOT.”

– GDoCExo Attendee, 2025



Ain't I a Game Dev



Pitch: Better Get Some Money!



Structuring Humor for a Global Audience (as Someone From Thailand)



Running a Remote Studio When Everything's On Fire

Creating Within Fear



Maquinitas, Tacos y 50 años de Videojuegos, Conoce la Historia de la Industria Mexicana

(presented in Spanish with English subtitles)

# GDoCExpo Online Social

We foster meaningful connections and community interaction in real time, using the Gather platform.

## Community Connections

Our online social enables live webcam conversations, open networking, 1:1 meetings, and game screensharing.

## Partner Presentations & AMAs

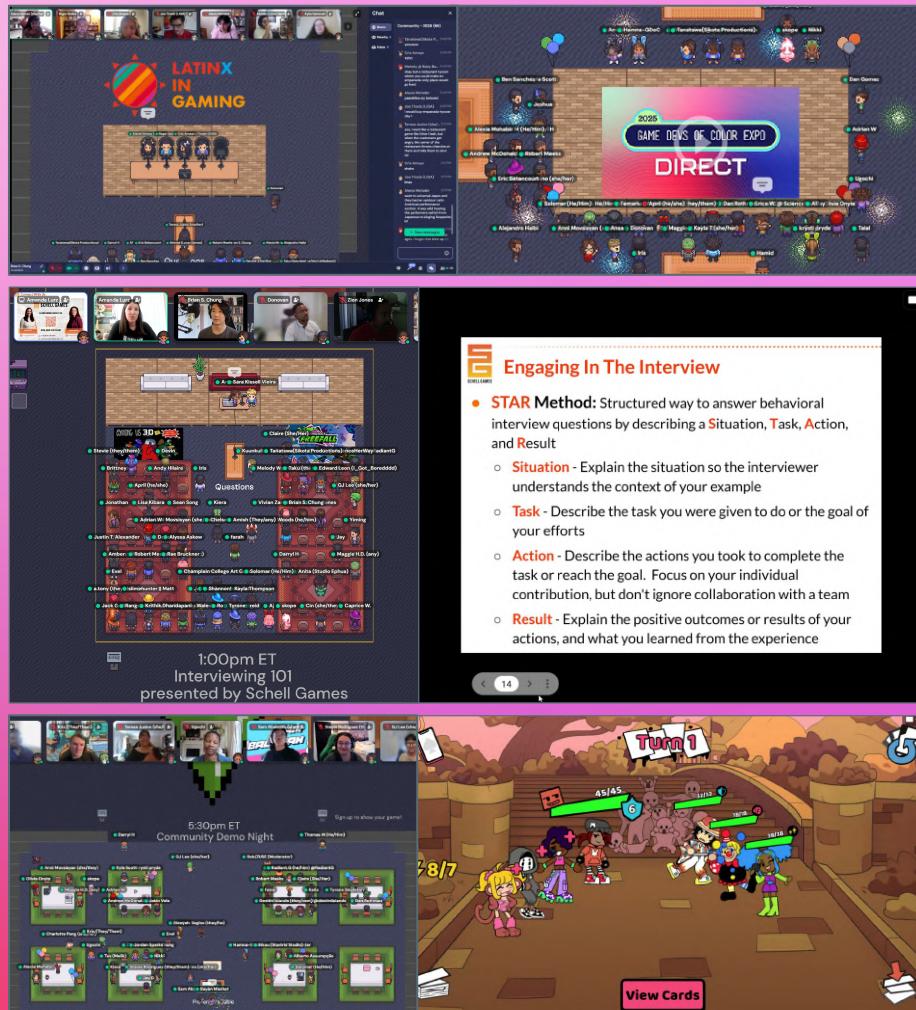
Community and industry partners (like Latinx in Gaming, No More Robots, Scopely/Niantic) engage directly with attendees through knowledge-sharing and live Q&A sessions.

## Community Demo Night

We host a dedicated demo space where creators from the community share their works-in-progress and lead discussions.

“Overall the event as a whole was amazing though **being able to talk with everyone** from speakers to attendees to the GDoCExpo team in the conversation areas of Gather **was the best part** of the event.”

– GDoCExpo Attendee, 2025



# GDoCExpo Watch Parties

We enable trusted partners to host **in-person** Watch Parties that bring GDoCExpo into local communities, extending the conference beyond the screen.

In 2025, **14 official Watch Parties** were hosted in cities across North America by studios, universities, and organizations.

1. NYC (GDoC)
2. Pittsburgh (Schell Games)
3. Rochester (RIT)
4. Poughkeepsie (Marist)
5. Portland (PIGSquad)
6. Edmonton (Interactive Arts Alberta)
7. Burlington (Champlain)
8. Winnipeg (Ubisoft Canada)
9. Toronto (Ubisoft Canada)
10. Montreal (Ubisoft Canada)
11. Sherbrooke (Ubisoft Canada)
12. Halifax (Ubisoft Canada)
13. Toronto (Sago Mini)
14. Austin (Owlchemy Labs)

“Thanks so much for your support through this process. This could not have been more of a success for the first time around. We had 100 people ... looking forward to more experiences for us to collaborate!”

– Watch Party host, 2025



“I especially enjoyed the in-person watch party, coming together in person makes the connections more personal.”

– Watch Party attendee, 2025

# Spotlight: NYC Watch Party

**Watch Party hosts can extend the conference with locally-driven community building.**

In addition to screening GDoCExo talks, the New York City Watch Party featured bonus activities on the schedule during the breaks, designed to foster play, connection, and visibility for local creators.

- Demos of games from local developers
- In-person interviews
- Massively Multiplayer Rock Paper Scissors

Hosts are encouraged to adapt and add unique programming that reflects local communities.

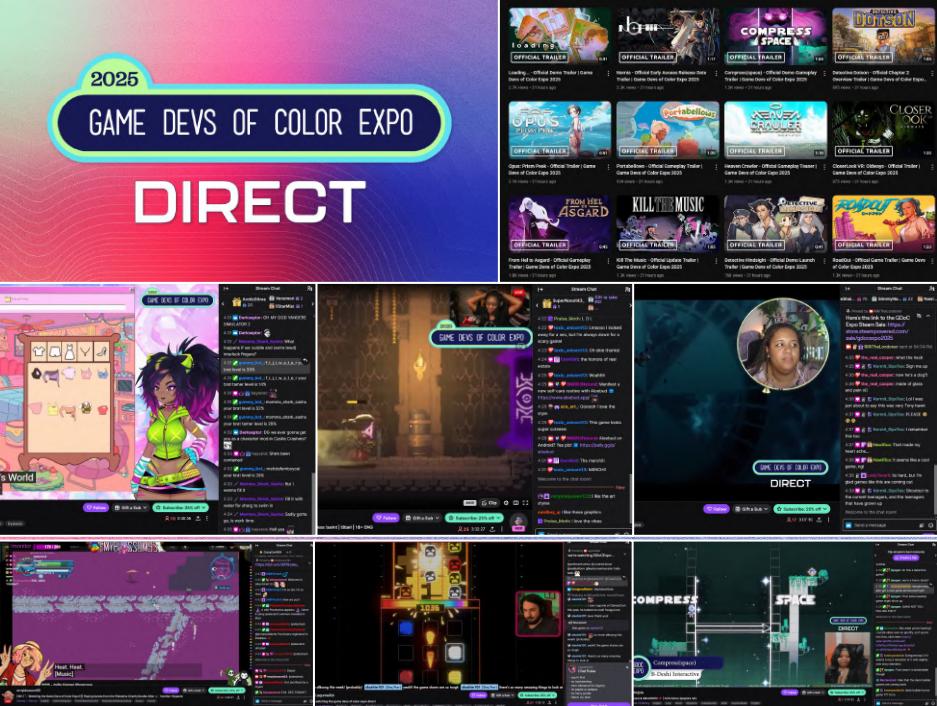


# The GDoCExpo Direct

Our annual video showcase featuring exclusive announcements and news from devs of color, connecting them with global media and players.

Premiered live during GDoCExpo, the Direct showcased **40 games** and was broadcast by major outlets like **IGN** and **Gamespot**, with trailers reposted on the **Game Trailers** channel.

Through new partnerships with **Twitch Unity Guilds**, the Direct was co-streamed by creators, expanding reach and real-time engagement.



"Aside from visibility metrics, seeing real-time reactions of attendees, streamers, presenters and devs while the direct games appeared was highly motivating and encouraging, and we appreciated the positive feedback. It was also thrilling to discover streamers on twitch sharing the direct!"

*- Participating Developer, 2025*

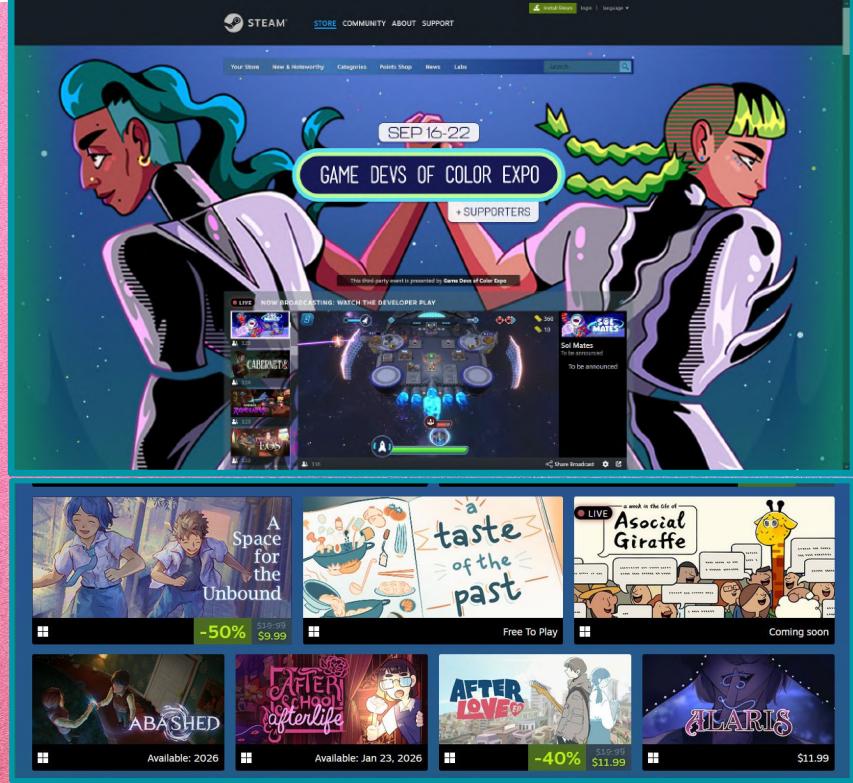
# The GDoCExpo Steam Sale

Our online games showcase driving discovery, sales, and tangible outcomes for developers, who run discounts, demos, and broadcasts, featured on the **front page** of Steam.

In 2025, we featured **300+ games** and drove **several hundreds of thousands** of visitors to participating titles.

**"I sold more copies in a day than launch week** (2 years earlier). A lot of the buyers hadn't wishlisted the game before, they discovered the game through the sale and immediately bought. **It was the best sale we've done since launch.** Thank you!"

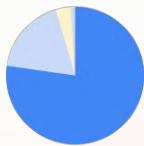
*- Participating Developer, 2025*



**"Our game had a very strong presence** during the Steam Sale. On the day of the global featuring, we had close to 460 viewers watching our broadcast, which was **one of our best experiences so far**. Thank you for this opportunity!"

*- Participating Developer, 2025*

# Outcomes & Satisfaction



**95%**

would **attend GDoCExpo again**  
*Strongly Agree (77.3%) or Agree (18.2%)*



**100%**

rated **GDoCExpo overall**  
*Very Positive (85%) or Positive (15%)*



**98%**

rated the **conference talks**  
*Very Positive (80.5%) or Positive (17.1%)*

overwhelmingly recommended

**85%**

of attendees would recommend GDoCExpo  
*+81 Net Promoter Score (exceptional)*



**99%**

**“GDoCExpo makes the games industry better.”**  
*Strongly Agree (78.8%) or Agree (20.0%)*



**84%**

**“GDoCExpo has positively impacted my career.”**  
*Strongly Agree (54.1%) or Agree (29.4%)*

**90%**

**of developers would recommend exhibiting at GDoCExpo**

*+90 Net Promoter Score*

**94%**

**of speakers would recommend speaking at GDoCExpo**

*+94 Net Promoter Score*

# Programs & Initiatives

# Game Devs of Color Grants

We award grants to emerging creators with strong vision and a demonstrated track record. Funds are used to amplify impact, often by starting or growing independent studios.

In 2025, we awarded **\$21,000** to **3 recipients**, who join an alumni network of 20+ leaders.



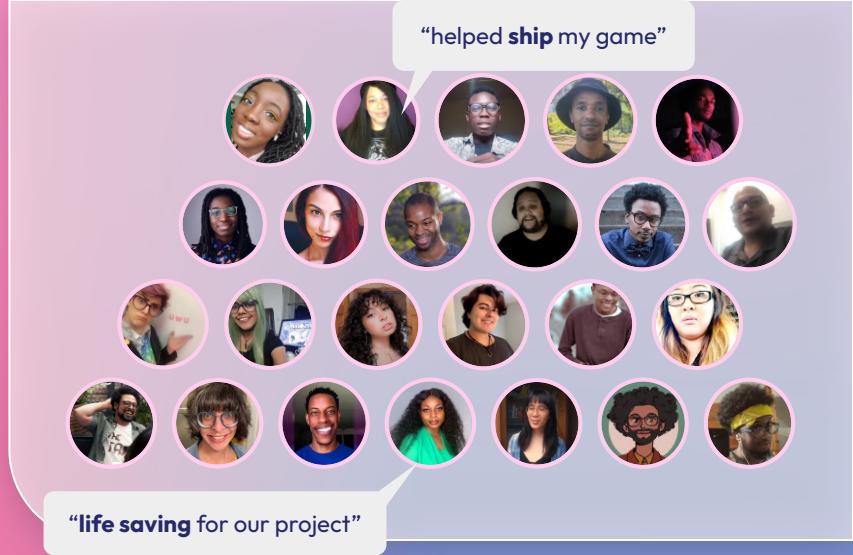
Chris James  
*Scramble Star Crossing*



Sri Kankanahalli  
*Neon Inferno*



Mays Dweiri  
*A Heavy Morning*



## Grant Spotlight: A Heavy Morning

Mays and her collaborators create beautifully animated gameplay that takes you into the mind of a young woman struggling to face the day ahead of her.

[wishlist \*A Heavy Morning\* on Steam](#)



# Game Devs of Color Scholarships

We remove financial and logistical barriers for creators to access in-person industry opportunities and accelerate their careers.

We design peer cohorts and on-site activities to build connection, learning, and professional relationships.

We supported 21 scholars in 2025:

- 9 GDC • 6 Games for Change • 4 devcom
- 100% could not have participated otherwise
- 100% made meaningful professional connections
- 83% rated it as very valuable for career growth

we support scholars directly

**\$7,400**

granted to scholars  
to support participation

we unlock value for scholars

**\$25K**

value of conference  
passes given to scholars

"This scholarship connected me with **incredibly inspiring** and **like-minded** game devs of color... I'm grateful not only for the financial support, but also for the **intentional empowerment** and **community building**."

- Scholarship Recipient, 2025



"This was a **major milestone** in my early career, and I felt **prepared to capitalize** ... through this opportunity, I was able to agree on a deal regarding **creating a platform** for early game devs and recent graduates to start publishing their own experimental narrative games."

- Scholarship Recipient, 2025

# Game Devs of Color Jobs

Amid widespread layoffs and studio closures, we continue to surface and amplify available opportunities. We run a curated job board connecting studios with creators of color.

Listings are shared on our website and amplified through our newsletter and community channels throughout the year.

we're building supportive infrastructure

40+

curated full-time  
jobs shared

AAA, AA, indie,  
tech, academic

studios / employers  
represented



GAME DEVS OF COLOR JOBS

BETA

Details



**Assistant/Associate Professor, Game Design** at Bloomfield College

Bloomfield, New Jersey, United States

Details



**Software Engineer, Server** at Niantic

Hybrid • San Francisco, CA • Sunnyvale, CA • Seattle Area (Bellevue), WA

Details



**Game Engineering Manager** at Schell Games

Hybrid • Pittsburgh, PA

Details



**Social Media Specialist** at Schell Games

Hybrid • Pittsburgh, PA

Details



**Senior Game Engineer (Unreal)** at Monomi Park

Hybrid • San Mateo, CA, USA

Details



**Senior Developer Advocate, Web Games** at Discord

San Francisco, CA or Remote (U.S.)

Details



**Graphics Software Engineer, Rendering - Reality Labs** at Meta

Bellevue, WA • Redmond, WA • Seattle, WA • Burlingame, CA • Remote, US

Details

# Community

## In-Person

We host in-person meetups that bring hundreds of creators together, creating space to connect, showcase work, and strengthen local networks.

## Online

We actively moderate a year-round community of GDoCExpo alumni, including artists, designers, programmers, producers, and publishers across indie, AA, and AAA studios.



San Francisco



New York City



We partner with orgs to give our community space to show games and connect.

ongoing alumni engagement

**12**

monthly  
meets

**52**

weekly  
discussions

active community sharing

**65+**

jobs  
shared

**45+**

events  
shared

**12+**

game  
launches  
celebrated

# New Initiatives

We use new initiatives to respond quickly to community needs, emerging challenges, and opportunities to expand our reach.

## Hardship Fundraiser Stream

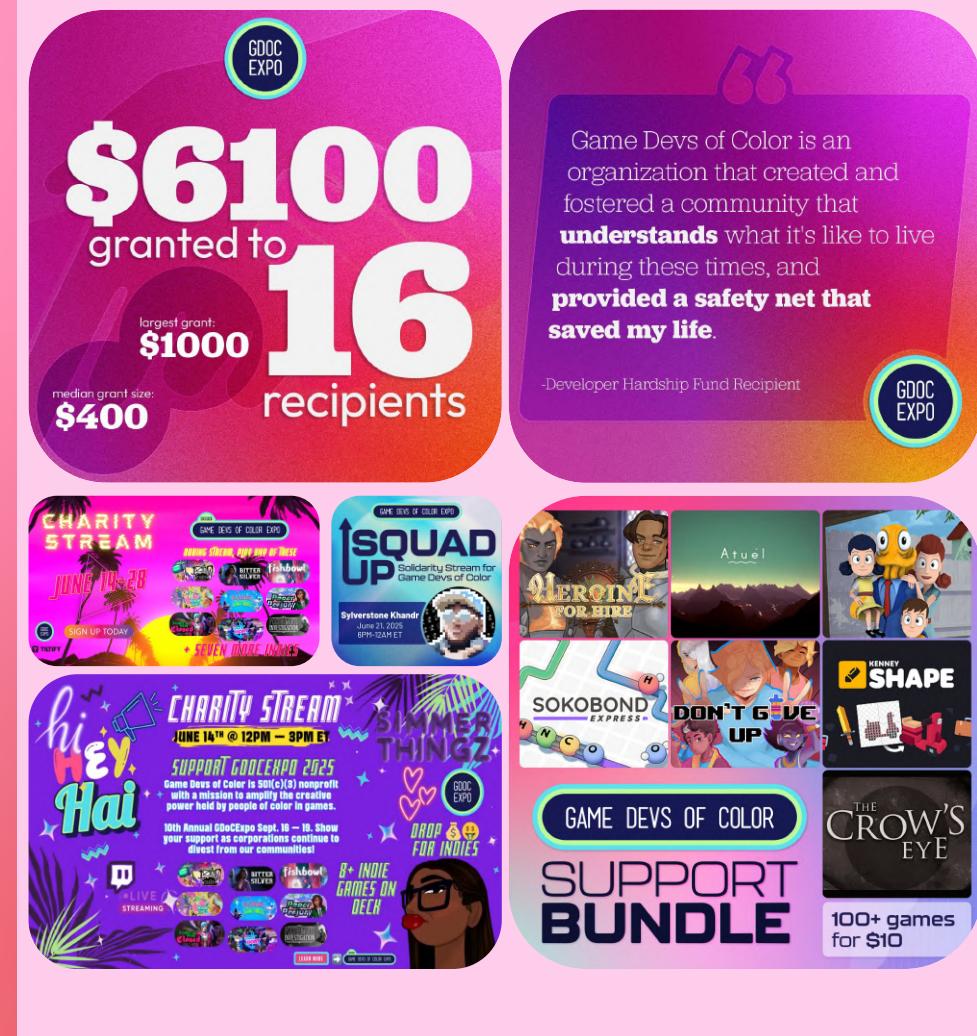
Live game showcases and developer interviews raised funds to support community members impacted by layoffs and industry instability. We awarded **16 microgrants** to creators in need.

## Squad Up: Solidarity Streams

We've begun to build partnerships with streamers and content creators to mobilize audiences in support of our mission.

## Game Devs of Color Support Bundle

Devs of color and allies contributed 100+ game titles to an itch bundle supporting the work of Game Devs of Color.



# Industry Recognition

# Press Coverage

**“In an industry that can often feel **hostile** and **uncaring**, organizations like Game Devs of Color are **precious testaments to the unyielding strength and kindness of the game dev community.**”**

*- Endless Mode, 2025*

sustained editorial interest

**31**

outlets covered us, with 59 pieces of coverage in 2025

industry-wide visibility

**78.6M**

combined total of outlet audiences in 2025

**“Game Devs of Color aren’t simply content with holding ground but continue to **challenge the status quo and support marginalised developers and creators.**”**

*- MCV/DEVELOP, 2025*

**“GDoCExpo does **phenomenal work** promoting **diversity and inclusivity** ... and creates a platform for developers of color to **showcase their work** and **make their voices heard.**”**

*- Events for Gamers, 2025*



engadget



 Game Developer

 Games Industry.biz



# Awards & Recognition

## Industry Impact Award

Game Devs of Color received the Industry Impact Award at the Indie Game Awards, recognizing our sustained contributions to equity and opportunity. [Our acceptance speech is available here.](#)

## Recognition from the City of New York

Game Devs of Color was officially recognized by the mayor of New York City. The certificate was presented in-person at our NYC Watch Party.

“GDoC excels at **uniting** and **empowering** game developers of color ... I applaud this innovative nonprofit organization for its efforts to **foster diversity** in our vital technology and entertainment sectors and **increase opportunities** for talented professionals from underrepresented communities ... Together, we are **forging a more inspiring, inclusive, and prosperous future.**”

– NYC Mayor Eric Adams, 2025



# Support

# Sponsors

No More Robots  
Scopely / Niantic  
Clever Endeavour  
Fellow Traveller  
Ghost Town Games  
Isometricorp Games  
Yale University  
Young Horses  
Akupara Games  
Anima Interactive  
Firaxis Games  
Games for Change  
Iron Galaxy  
Schell Games  
System Era  
Turbo  
Ubisoft  
NYC MOME



Yale



TURBO



# Partners

## Grant Partners

Gamers Engaged  
MadeInNY  
Nora Roberts Foundation  
New York State Council of the Arts

## Community Partners

Bloomfield College of Montclair State University  
Champlain College  
Interactive Arts Alberta  
Marist University  
Portland Indie Game Squad  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
The Yetee

## Event Partners

Black in Gaming  
Game Developers Conference  
Gamescom dev  
Games for Change + Next-Gen Summit  
International Game Developers Association  
Indie Game Utsav  
Latinx in Gaming  
NY Tech Alliance  
Play NYC

## Individual Donors

We are grateful to the many individuals who contributed to our work in 2025.



RIT



# Financial Snapshot

## Revenue

Sponsorships: \$120,000

Individual Giving: \$14,146

Grants: \$15,000

Other: \$23,086

## Expenses

Programs: \$168,000

Operations: \$54,000

*Expenses exceeded revenue in 2025 due to strategic investments in program growth and community impact.*

### Revenue

Individual Giving

8.7%

Other

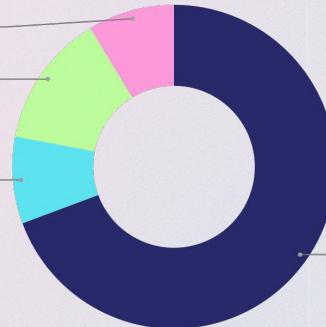
13.3%

Grants

8.7%

Sponsorships

69.3%



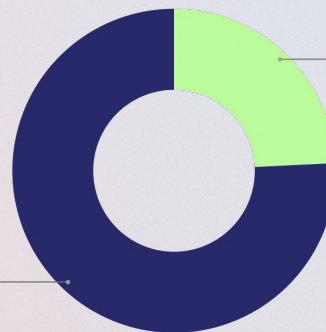
### Expenses

Operations

24.3%

Programs

75.7%



# **Game Devs of Color in 2026**

# Strategic Priorities

2026 is about depth, consistency, and building systems that last.  
These priorities are summarized from our [2025-2027 Strategic Plan](#).

## Community & Programs

Deliver high-quality, developer-first experiences year-round  
Expand the impact and reach of GDoCExo and related programs

## Operational Effectiveness

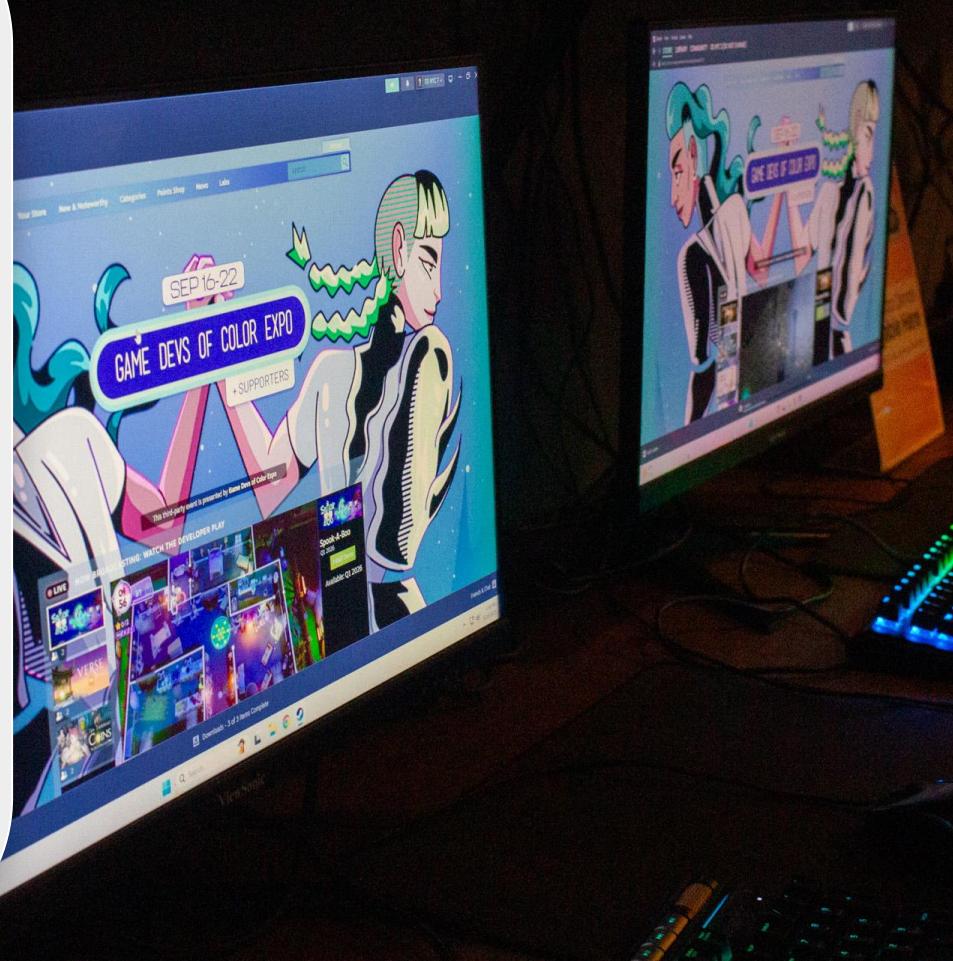
Deliver all programs on time and on budget  
Streamline core processes and improve internal efficiency

## Financial Sustainability

Raise at least 110% of annual expenses to support stable growth  
Strengthen sponsorships, grants, and earned revenue

## Organizational Resilience

Formalize the governing board and establish an advisory board  
Reduce organizational risk and strengthen long-term capacity



# Acknowledgements

## Board

Catt Small, Executive Director

Brian Carr, Creative Director

Brian Chung, Director of Programs & Development

GJ Lee, Director of Operations

## 2025 Contributors

Alexia Mohabir, Community & Merch Manager

Brittinee Phillips, Email Marketing Manager

Danielle Wallace, Scholarships Coordinator

Emperatriz Ung, Ticketing Coordinator

Hamna Faisal, Partnerships Associate

Iman Fayek, Games Associate

Jayce Nguyen, Web Developer

Josh Boykin, Head of Curation

Khatiti Harper, Graphic Design Coordinator

Krystel Theuvenin, Speakers Coordinator

Martin Garcia, Event Associate

Myleah Lofland, Social Media Manager

Sharpie, Host

Thanks to our moderation team, illustrator Shannon Wright, and our collaborators GLITCH, FITC, & FIFTYcc.



## Advisory Board

We're seeking advisory board members in 2026. If you have related experience, get in touch at [directors@gamedevsofcolor.org](mailto:directors@gamedevsofcolor.org) and include how you can contribute.

## Get Involved

**Join us for GDoCExpo, Sep 22 - 25**

[gamedevs ofcolor.org](https://gamedevs ofcolor.org)

**Present a talk or showcase a game**

[gamedevs ofcolor.org/apply](https://gamedevs ofcolor.org/apply)

**Become a supporter**

[gamedevs ofcolor.org/donate](https://gamedevs ofcolor.org/donate)

**Host an in-person Watch Party**

[gamedevs ofcolor.org/watch-parties](https://gamedevs ofcolor.org/watch-parties)

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