

**Play, Learn, Innovate:**

Uniting Research, Education & Game  
Industry

Online workshop

7 May 2025

OUTCOMES

## Contributors:

- Thomas Vigild, Head of The National Academy of Digital Interactive Entertainment (DADIU) ([tvigild@filmskolen.dk](mailto:tvigild@filmskolen.dk))
- Lukas Kolek, CEO at Charles Games ([lukaskolek@live.com](mailto:lukaskolek@live.com))
- Rebecca Harris, Research Assistant at the University of Greater Manchester ([R.Harris@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:R.Harris@bolton.ac.uk))
- Paul Hollins, Professor at University of Greater Manchester ([P.A.Hollins@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:P.A.Hollins@bolton.ac.uk))
- Kim Holflod, postdoctoral Researcher, Aarhus University ([kimh@edu.au.dk](mailto:kimh@edu.au.dk))
- Irene Andriopoulou, EU Media Literacy Expert, Director Creative Hub GR, H.F.A.C. – Creative Greece ([ce.andriopoulou@ekkomed.gr](mailto:ce.andriopoulou@ekkomed.gr))
- Renia Papathanasiou, Innovation, Gaming & New Technologies Creative Hub GR, H.F.A.C. – Creative Greece ([a.papathanasiou@ekkomed.gr](mailto:a.papathanasiou@ekkomed.gr))
- Martine Spaans, General Manager at the Dutch Games Association ([martine@dutchgamesassociation.nl](mailto:martine@dutchgamesassociation.nl))

Moderating and Editing: Christina Tsita, Research Associate, Centre for Research and Technology – Hellas (CERTH) ([tsita@iti.gr](mailto:tsita@iti.gr))

Special thanks to Belit Ayaydin ([bea@cbnet.com](mailto:bea@cbnet.com)) for hosting the event on the Creative Business Network platform and to María Ruigómez Eraso ([mrui Gomez@keanet.eu](mailto:mrui Gomez@keanet.eu)) for the dissemination.

## Games for Culture Cluster members:



**EPIC-WE**  
Empowered Participation through Idealing  
Cultural Worlds and Environments



**GREAT**

**//MEMENTOES**

## Invited speakers:



**DADIU**



**DGA**  
DUTCH GAMES ASSOCIATION



Hellenic Film &  
Audiovisual Center  
Creative Greece



**Funded by  
the European Union**

The projects participating in the Games for Culture Cluster have received funding from the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

## Summary

The Games for Culture Cluster (GCC) organized an online workshop on Wednesday, 7 May 2025, from 11:00 to 12:30 CET<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of the workshop was to explore ways to bridge research, education, and the game industry in order to create impactful games.

The workshop brought together participants from diverse backgrounds, including companies, research institutions, universities, and organizations engaged in both formal and non-formal education, vocational training, and lifelong learning.

Discussions focused on several key themes. These included the ways in which research, education, and the game industry can collaborate to address issues across various sectors—such as the creative industries, education, technology, and community development—by leveraging the power of games. Participants also explored how games can be designed not only for entertainment but also for learning with applications in different fields like cultural heritage, and healthcare.

Another important topic was the role of games in fostering social cohesion and driving social change. The workshop also addressed the development of innovative business models that can enhance collaboration among researchers, educators, and game developers, thereby strengthening their collective impact.

The event featured real-world examples from companies, institutions, and organizations across Europe, highlighting different approaches and successful practices.

In addition to dialogue and knowledge sharing, a key objective of the workshop was to document its outcomes. This includes capturing key insights, challenges, and recommendations to support future collaborations, inform policy and practice, and inspire the development of meaningful projects and initiatives.

The workshop was open and free to attend. It lasted 90 minutes and included six 10-minute presentations followed by an interactive session. In total, 27 people attended and contributed to the discussions. The outcomes have been mapped, refined, and are presented in this document.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://mycreativenetworks.com/events/177504>



## 1. Speakers' insights

**Thomas Vigild** shared insights from his work with The National Academy of Digital Interactive Entertainment (DADIU), emphasizing that collaboration among research, education and game industry is not just a bonus but a necessity when designing cross-curricular games.

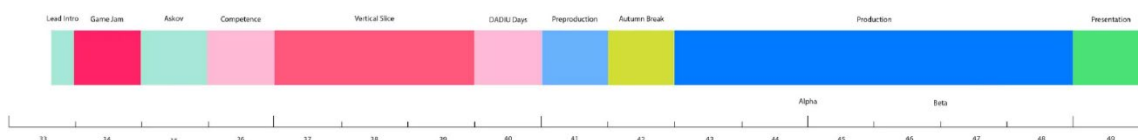
He explained how DADIU connects educators and the game industry through a unique, semester-based program that builds practical game production skills. Operated by the National Film School of Denmark, the program involves 13 art schools and universities and serves as a strong example of successful cooperation between education and the game industry. Collaboration and networking help students build connections with industry professionals, boosting employment prospects after graduation. The skills acquired during the program are directly aligned with industry needs, creating a clear pathway to careers in game development.

Vigild also shared 9 findings in designing cross-curricular games education based on his experience. These findings foster a shared language among stakeholders and strengthen ties between education, and the game industry during the DADIU semester (Figure 1).

1. Be part of something (bigger): Help students feel they're contributing to something greater than themselves.
2. Establish psychological safety: Create a safe space where students can fail freely to learn.
3. Ideation process crucial: Make students feel heard.
4. Visit & include the industry/researchers: Engage with industry and integrate research into game production.
5. DADIU Days: Annual "students-meet-industry" event, next in Copenhagen, October 2025.
6. Art schools students vs University students = MAGIC = CHAOS: Bring art school students and University students and make them work together – merge their different thinking.
7. The Overscoping: Guide students to set realistic goals and complete their projects.
8. Roleplaying as professionals: Let students step into real-world roles to boost engagement and ownership.



9. Learn to yearn: Inspire passion for the game vision before diving into tasks and features.



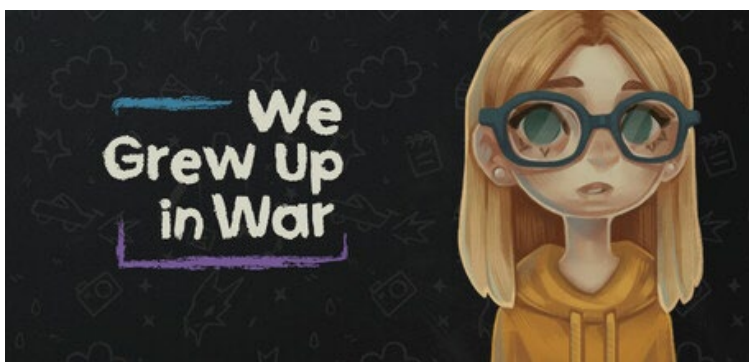
10. Figure 1. Overview of the DADIU semester (Autumn)

**Lukaš Kolek** presented a game developed by Charles Games, a game company that focuses on interesting topics and creating games with impact. Specifically, he presented the game “We Grew Up in War”<sup>2</sup>, a game about childhoods shaped by war.

He highlighted the involvement of experts in the development process - in this case, War Childhood Museum, under the scope of the EU funded project MEMENTOES.

The game consists of stories inspired by the museum's collection, developed in continuous collaboration with museum professionals. At the same time, the team conducted their own research, which resulted in scientific publications regarding the design and impact of the game.

The game highlights both the struggles of war and the resilience of children. A key concept is multiperspectivity, represented through eight game characters. The storylines explore not only their experiences during the war, but also their lives before and after, giving the characters more space to develop.

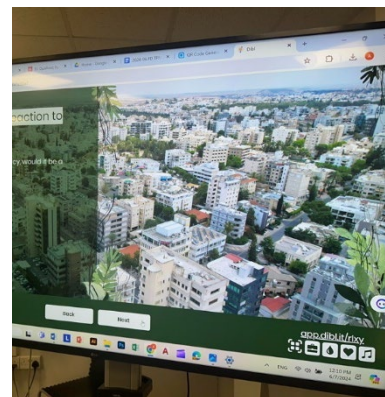


Another important aspect of the game is that the creators did not aim to teach players by listing dates and facts. Instead, the goal is to immerse players in lived experiences, encourage reflection on the consequences of war (e.g. anxiety, trauma), and foster empathy.

<sup>2</sup> [https://store.steampowered.com/app/3254380/We\\_Grew\\_Up\\_in\\_War/?beta=1](https://store.steampowered.com/app/3254380/We_Grew_Up_in_War/?beta=1)

**Rebecca Harris** presented an overview of the EU-funded GREAT project's activities, focusing on game-based case studies designed to engage citizens in climate-related policy issues.

The project aims to demonstrate the positive impact of games on social engagement by creating new forms of dialogue between citizens and policy stakeholders. The approach explores the innovative potential of games as tools for citizens to express their preferences and attitudes on policy issues. The research focuses on investigating the actual and potential impacts of games on European society and how they can be used to support citizen engagement, with a focus on the climate emergency. The methodology combines academic research and practical experimentation through collaborative design and citizen science, using a series of case studies that address policy issues through games.



The case studies tested two main formats:

- The PlanetPlay model, which embeds climate-related survey questions within popular games, enabling access to demographics often overlooked by traditional climate communication. Game studios involved aimed to gather data to refine their approach to incorporating environmental messaging within their platforms.
- The DiBL approach, Dilemma Based Learning-style dilemma games, where participants play and discuss decisions together, a more reflective, slower-paced approach.

Rebecca explained that traditional climate engagement methods often struggle due to limited resources, one-way communication, and lack of feedback. In contrast, games offer immersive, interactive, and scalable formats that can better engage groups typically excluded from policy discussions.

The two approaches were applied in eleven case studies, with five highlighted during the presentation. The GREAT case studies demonstrated how games can be powerful tools for engaging diverse audiences—especially youth—in climate-related policy discussions, offering scalable, cost-effective ways to gather insights, stimulate dialogue, and influence behaviour across different contexts. From mobile dilemmas to embedded surveys, each case showed unique strengths in bridging the gap between citizens and policymakers.

The general insights showed that people do engage through games: dilemma games encouraged reflection and dialogue, while survey-based ones reached wider audiences. However, challenges remain, including limited tech access, long-term funding, institutional resistance, and reaching underrepresented groups.

**Kim Holflod** presented the Quadruple Helix Cultural Hub Model and Approach developed within the EU funded project EPIC-WE. The project innovates and critically examines three interconnected cultural innovation practices:

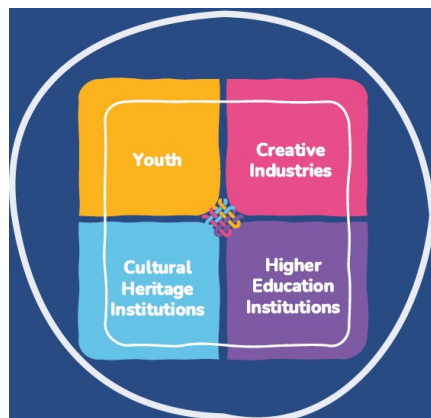
1. Quadruple Helix (QH) Cultural Hubs that utilise Quadruple Helix Innovation Ecosystems and Living Labs to enable cultural heritage institutions (CHIs), creative industries (CIs), higher education institutions (HEIs), and youth citizens (YCs) in equal and transformative partnerships towards empowered cultural participation and innovation.
2. Cultural Game Jams as a format that merges game-making and culture-making, empowering youth to actively shape culture, heritage, and society through collaborative cultural game jam processes and creating games *through* and *for* culture.
3. Games *through* and *for* Culture are the outcomes of cultural game jams that engage, transform, and reimagine cultural heritage, culture, and society through games and game-making.

These collaborations include Youth, CIs, CHIs, and HEIs, form the public sector, government, research, and industry – at both regional (local) and transactional (glocal) levels.

Kim highlighted 6 core principles of QH Cultural Hubs:

1. Democratise cultural innovation by including citizens and users as core partners in the QH Cultural Hub.
2. Form equal and transformative partnerships in cultural innovation
3. Encourage institutes to meet in the middle
4. Practice co-creative cultural innovation and transformation for public good(s)
5. Develop real-world, real-life QH Cultural Hubs
6. Advance empowered participation in culture

Finally, he emphasized that empowerment is the key ingredient in this approach.





**Irene Andriopoulou and Renia Papathanasiou** presented the activities of Creative Hub GR's (by H.F.A.C.-Creative Greece) as a catalyst for impactful games and its role in gaming and education.

Irene Andriopoulou, Director of the Creative Hub GR, presented the new agency of H.F.A.C., which aims to address the educational and entertainment needs of the gaming industry in Greece. She outlined the Hub's focus on creative media literacy, community development, and collaboration with local and international stakeholders.

Hellenic Film &  
Audiovisual Center  
Creative Greece



Renia Papathanasiou, Responsible for Innovation, Gaming & New Tech, elaborated on the Hub's initiatives, including student competitions that encourage creativity and teamwork in game design, highlighting the growth and success of these competitions since their inception.

They explained the collaboration of the H.F.A.C. – Creative Greece with experts to run such competitions and promote the use and creation of games in education, aligned with the national strategy for the gaming industry in Greece.

Finally, they encouraged the participants to explore the activities of H.F.A.C. – Creative Greece while there are opportunities for national and international collaborations.

**Martine Spaans** presented an overview of the Dutch game industry. The Dutch Games Association (DGA) represents a wide range of members including game studios, publishers, distributors, and service providers (e.g. hosting, audio, etc.). The DGA organizes various events throughout the year, such as the INDIGO Conference (May 27–28), the Dutch Game Awards, and multiple knowledge exchange gatherings.

She outlined distinctive qualities often seen in Dutch games: innovative, daring, pathfinding, critical, peculiar, divergent, and progressive. Martine presented several examples that reflect how Dutch games can challenge traditional definitions of games,



integrate technological innovation, and express values such as naturalistic aesthetics in female protagonist, and critical perspectives on issues like climate change. She emphasized that games can be used to create a better world, share knowledge, or even



change behavior. One example is the Tovertafel, a game that encourages people with dementia to move and interact.

Martine enumerated some entertainment companies and explained that there is a growing set of companies that have achieved success by growing their team size in order to capitalize on the opportunities in the game industry. Further strengthening of the ecosystem is expected in the years to come. Additionally, she enlisted some notable companies explaining that apart from entertainment games, The Netherlands is strong in “serious games” - utilizing game technology and design principles for real-world applications. Ranging from interactive visualizations to training simulators and educational games, the use of serious games has the potential to shape companies, education and society at large. With application areas such as healthcare, HR onboarding, process training, and general education, serious games are becoming more and more widespread.

Martine emphasized that the Dutch game industry includes more than just developers—it also involves publishers, investors, service providers, consumers. DGA is also connected with governments to demonstrate the broader benefits of games, not only in job creation but also in developing key skillsets.

Finally, she underlined that games are not just for kids or entertainment—with over 10.1 million people in the Netherlands playing games, they are clearly a fundamental part of modern society.

## 2. Workshop Outcomes

This section presents insights from the presentations and discussions that took place during the workshop, structured around four main guiding questions. These insights were documented in a mind map created using Mural<sup>3</sup>. The central concepts of the scheme were **Play**, **Learn**, and **Innovate**, representing the game industry, education, and research, respectively (Figure 2).

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<https://app.mural.co/t/certhiti0778/m/certhiti0778/1746529489183/43cd0232f0d57dc7568358f7bd1f951d06823e02>



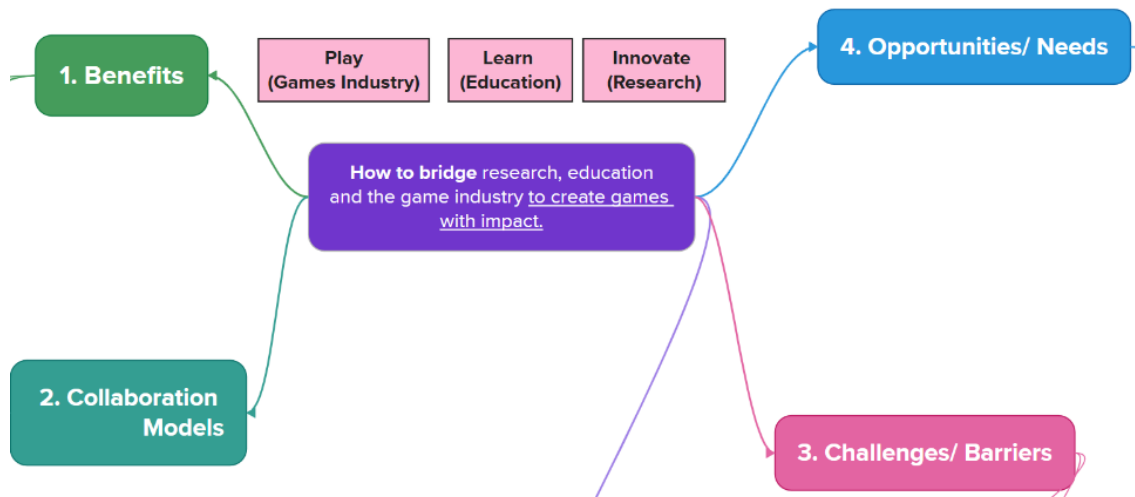


Figure 2. Mapping outcomes under four main questions

At the core of the workshop was the overarching question: **“How can research, education, and the game industry be bridged to create games with impact?”**. Participants explored this question through four sub-questions focused on:

1. The **benefits** of collaboration
2. Effective models for **collaboration**
3. Existing **challenges and barriers**
4. **Opportunities and needs** for future development

Following the workshop, contributors refined and elaborated on the outcomes, resulting in the insights presented below.

## 2.1 Benefits

The starting question was about the benefits that the collaboration among games, research and education can have.

**What are the BENEFITS from collaboration among Game Industry, Research and Education?**

Key points emerged:

- The collaboration **when designing cross-curricular games is not a bonus but necessity.**
- Connect high education and industry market - **aligning acquired skills with industry needs.**
- **Boost employment prospects.**
- **Create shared language** among stakeholders and strengthen ties between education, and the game industry.
- Practicing collaboration and networking, **creates opportunities and growth for involved actors.**
- **Merge different thinking** into something greater when making games.
- Collaborating with experts enables the **simulation of reality** in games.
- People **learn skills.**
- People can use games to explore **conflict resolution** by safely navigating dilemmas, practicing empathy, and experimenting with different outcomes in a simulated environment.
- **Games with interesting topics and impact.**
- **Games can have scientific (papers) and societal impact (culture).**
- **More resources for game stories and inspiration** e.g. inspiration from museum collections and expertise.
- **Create new forms of dialogue between citizens and policy stakeholders** for important issues like climate change.
- Games can support citizens understand real-life impact and can drive **social change.**
- **Address real policy issues** through games and **enhance citizen engagement.**
- **Be able to highlight the actual and potential impacts of games** in European society – when research collaborates with game industry.
- **Qualitative research** can uncover the lived experiences behind quantitative trends, helping to interpret data in a more meaningful and human-centred way.



- **Shape culture, heritage and society** – through collaborative cultural game jam processes and creating games.
- **Empower youth.**
- Able to combine creativity, evidence, and pedagogical value **into a single product.**
- **Enhance innovation** by drawing from diverse perspectives and knowledge bases.
- **Increase reach and relevance** of both academic research and game-based learning.

To sum up, **collaboration between the game industry, research, and education offers a wide range of benefits** that go beyond individual sectoral gains. It is not simply a bonus, but a **necessity**—particularly in designing cross-curricular games—because it aligns educational outcomes with real industry needs, boosts employment prospects, and fosters a **shared language** among stakeholders. By connecting higher education with the market, it strengthens ties, supports skill development, and prepares students for meaningful careers.

Such collaboration fuels **creativity and innovation**, merging diverse ways of thinking and enabling the simulation of real-world scenarios. Games allow learners to explore complex issues like **conflict resolution**, practice empathy, and experiment with outcomes in safe, interactive environments. Games produced through these partnerships can combine scientific rigor, educational value, and cultural relevance—amplifying both **academic and societal impact**.

Furthermore, games become tools for **citizen engagement**, particularly on urgent topics like **climate change**, where they help translate policy issues into relatable experiences and foster new forms of dialogue between citizens and decision-makers. When research partners with the game industry, it can surface the **lived experiences** behind data, providing richer insight and driving social change.

Collaborative initiatives such as **cultural game jams** empower young people to shape **culture, heritage, and society**, while partnerships with museums and cultural institutions offer new resources and narrative inspiration. Ultimately, these synergies increase the **reach, relevance, and innovation** potential of all sectors involved—education, research, and industry alike.

## 2.2 Collaboration Models

The second question, explores ways that involved actors can practice to collaborate and boost the interaction with each other.

### Then, How to collaborate more closer and effectively? – COLLABORATION MODELS

Key points emerged:

- **Semester-based program** that builds practical game production skills, aligned with game industry needs.
- **Connect students with the game industry** to create games.
- **Students visit and include industry and researchers** into the game production.
- **Networking events**, to meet up in the same place and interact, such as:
  - the DADIU days, an annual event where students meet industry.
  - The INDIGO conference, the Dutch Game Awards and knowledge sharing gatherings.
- **Make university and art school student** to work together and practice – to merge different thinking in game creation.
- **EU and other funding** (MENTOS, GREAT, EPIC-WE)
- **Partnerships**
- **Co-creation and collaboration workshops among game developers and museums** for specific topics as the example of the We Grew Up in War game (Charles games and War Childhood Museum).
- **Cultural participation and community well-being**, it's important to consider how metrics might obscure or oversimplify complex social and creative dynamics.
- **Communicating findings accessibly**—especially in community or cross-sector settings—ensures that insights lead to real engagement and impact.
- **PlanetPlay model and DiBL approach** to address policy issues and bridge the gap between citizens and policy makers<sup>4</sup> (Rebecca). GREAT showcases how games can be powerful tools for engaging diverse audiences—especially youth—in climate-related policy discussions, offering scalable, cost-effective ways to gather insights, stimulate dialogue, and influence behaviour across different contexts.
- **QH Cultural Hubs** to connect enable CHIs, CIs, HEIs, and YCs in equal and transformative partnerships to empower cultural participation and innovation.
- **Game Jams** – such as Cultural Game Jams that merge game-making and culture-making, empowering youth and resulting in games *through* and *for* Culture.

<sup>4</sup> <https://zenodo.org/communities/101094766/records?q=&l=list&p=1&s=10&sort=newest>



- **Collaborations** among Youth, CIs, CHIs, and HEIs, from the public sector, government, research, and industry – at both regional (local) and transactional (global) levels.
- **Student competitions.**
- **Joint workshops** where educators, researchers, and developers brainstorm and prototype together.
- **Living labs** for interactive development and evaluation.
- **Fellowship / residency programs** embedded in gaming studios, educational and research institutions.
- **Clustering activities** for knowledge sharing, collaboration, networking, etc. such as the Games for Culture Cluster (GCC)<sup>5</sup>. The cluster initiated by MEMENTOES and currently consist of 7 EU-funded projects. The aim is to continue and strengthen its activities and continuously expanding with new members.

Summarizing the above, to collaborate more closely and effectively across the game industry, research, and education, several **collaboration models** have emerged as promising pathways. One effective model the **semester-based program** (DADIU), which align game production training with industry needs by connecting students directly with professionals and integrating visits from both industry and researchers. Joint participation in **networking events**—such as DADIU Days, the INDIGO Conference, and the Dutch Game Awards—creates vital spaces for knowledge exchange, relationship building, and shared experiences.

**Student competitions** (like those that EKOME organizes) in game making can strengthen the gap between formal primary/secondary education and game industry in national level. In higher education, **cross-disciplinary teamwork**, especially between university and art school students, fosters innovative thinking by merging diverse perspectives in game making. **Co-creation workshops** for experts and game industry are also a model that can lead to meaningful games with impact (like Charles Games and War Childhood Museum collaboration). Additionally, **living labs** further deepen collaborative learning, while **residency and fellowship programs** embedded within studios or academic institutions help bridge sectoral gaps on a more sustained basis.

**EU-funded projects** like GREAT, EPIC-WE, and MEMENTOES serve as key enablers by providing resources and structured platforms for collaboration. These projects demonstrate how partnerships—such as between game studios and cultural institutions

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<sup>5</sup> <https://games-for-culture.eu/>





(e.g., “We Grew Up in War”)—can lead to meaningful, impactful games that address real-world topics like conflict or climate change.

**Models like the PlanetPlay and DiBL approaches** illustrate how games can function as tools for civic dialogue and public policy engagement, making abstract or complex issues more relatable. **Quadruple Helix (QH) Cultural Hubs** and **Cultural Game Jams** represent collaborative ecosystems where youth, cultural heritage institutions, creative industries, and academia work together in equal, transformative partnerships at both local and international levels.

Finally, initiatives like the **Games for Culture Cluster (GCC)** exemplify the power of **clustering activities**—bringing multiple EU-funded projects together to strengthen cross-project collaboration, promote shared learning, and build a sustainable community of practice across sectors. Such clustering initiatives are more impactful when their activities continue beyond the timeline of the projects’ funding.

These models collectively point to a core principle: **successful collaboration requires intentional, structured spaces where different actors can co-create, share, and sustain engagement over time.**



## 2.3 Challenges and barriers

The third question explores the biggest obstacles in collaboration across research, education and game industry and the challenges emerged.

**So, What hinders us the most to make these collaborations? - What are the CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:**

Key points emerged:

- **Academic structures:** Academic systems often undervalue interdisciplinary or practice-based work like game development.
- **Logistics:** Coordinating between institutions and industry partners is complicated and resource-intensive.
- **Unwillingness to accept production as academic experience:** Game production is rarely recognized as valid academic output, limiting participation.
- Challenges in **public engagement** to address important policy issues, challenge to attract and sustain the attention from diverse audiences remains - struggle to engage younger or marginalised groups and reach underrepresented groups.
- **Different workflows** across sectors - academic, industry, education. (Irene, Renia)
- **Lack of sustainable funding and long-term support** for interdisciplinary projects.
- **Funding cycles** perception is different due to different timelines and way of working making difficult to sync or to mature collaborations.
- **Communication gaps** that increase the efforts needed.

Overall, several key **challenges and barriers** hinder closer collaboration between the game industry, research, and education. A major issue lies within **academic structures**, which often undervalue interdisciplinary, practice-based work like game development. This includes the **reluctance to recognize game production as valid academic output**, making it harder for academics and students to fully engage. Moreover, **logistical challenges**—such as aligning timelines, goals, and resources between institutions and industry—can make collaboration resource-intensive and difficult to sustain.

There are also **structural differences in workflows** across sectors, with academia, industry, and education operating under distinct norms and expectations. These differences as well as different priorities can lead to **communication gaps** and misunderstandings that slow progress.

**Public engagement presents its own challenges**, particularly in addressing important policy issues through games. It's difficult to attract and retain the attention of **diverse or underrepresented audiences**, including youth and marginalized groups.

A significant barrier is the **lack of sustainable funding and long-term institutional support** for interdisciplinary collaboration. Current **funding cycles** are often too short or too long for public institutions or game studios respectively bringing difficulties in collaboration and may be rigid to accommodate the iterative and experimental nature of game-based projects, limiting their impact and scalability. Without ongoing interaction among research, education and game partners in different ways it is difficult form mature lasting collaborations.

## 2.4 Opportunities and needs

This question explores the existing opportunities that can be leveraged and the emerged needs to enable and strengthen collaborations.

**And, What we can do with what we have? – What are the OPPORTUNITIES or NEEDS to make these collaborations to work better.**

Key points emerged:

- **Remote work** in the Game industry.
- Use **Europe's Cultural Heritage** as source of game stories and inspiration.
- **Leveraging digital game-based interventions to enhance public engagement** while optimising resource efficiency. Game-based approaches offer a scalable alternative to traditional methods, allowing for widespread participation without requiring continuous input from facilitators. Interactive platforms also foster deeper engagement by providing immersive, dynamic experiences that encourage sustained involvement.
- **Include citizens and users as core partners** to democratize cultural innovation and ensure relevance and inclusivity.
- **Foster equal and transformative partnerships across sectors** to strengthen collaboration and mutual learning.
- **Encourage institutions to meet in the middle**, bridging gaps between research, education, and industry cultures.
- **Promote co-creative processes focused on public good**, using culture and games as vehicles for societal transformation.
- **Create and support real-world Cultural Hubs** that connect actors in meaningful ways.
- **Empower active participation in culture**, especially from youth and underrepresented groups, and using accessible formats of games.
- **Utilize accessible tools** to co-create and visualize ideas.
- **Host hybrid events** such as jams, showcases etc. to bring sectors together.
- **Leverage successful models** of collaboration.
- Develop **public funding streams specifically for cross-sector game initiatives**.
- **Support media literacy and game-based education**.
- **Practice communication, interaction, collaboration in multiple and structured ways**

To sum up, there are several tangible opportunities and needs that can help strengthen collaboration between research, education, and the game industry. One of the clearest

opportunities is the growing flexibility of the game industry itself—**remote work** has become more common, allowing for cross-border and cross-sector collaboration.

In parallel, **Europe's rich cultural heritage** offers a vast and underused source of inspiration for meaningful game content, that can bring related experts closer to game developers.

In the field of citizens engagement and social change, **game-based approaches** also offer scalable ways to engage the public, often more effectively than traditional outreach. These approaches are especially valuable when resources are limited, allowing for **broad participation** and foster sustained interaction without requiring constant facilitation. These tools are particularly effective in **reaching diverse audiences**, making them valuable for civic engagement and education alike.

To support the suggested collaborative ecosystem – among research, education and games, it is crucial to develop **public funding streams specifically for cross-sector game initiatives**, helping ensure long-term sustainability. There's also a need to support **media literacy and game-based education**, empowering people to understand, engage with, and benefit from games in diverse contexts.

Principles from the QH Cultural Hubs model further point to the importance of **democratizing innovation**, fostering **equal partnerships**, and encouraging institutions to “meet in the middle.” Co-creative processes focused on the **public good**, rooted in real-world needs and active **youth participation**, can help create relevant and inclusive outcomes. There is also a need to support **real-world Cultural Hubs** where stakeholders can connect meaningfully and **use games as tools for cultural participation and social transformation**. These hubs can act as living labs for experimentation, grounded in co-creative, public-good-oriented processes.

On a practical level, tools for accessible co-creation and hybrid events—such as **game jams, showcases, and workshops**—are already in place and can be leveraged more systematically. Drawing on **existing successful models of collaboration**, and **supporting initiatives that bridge gaps between sectors**, can make collaborations more effective and sustainable going forward.

## 2.5 Overall Conclusions and Discussion

Bridging research, education, and the game industry enables the creation of **more effective games** that serve multiple purposes. These games can be integrated into **formal education systems**, support **lifelong learning**, and be used to **train professionals** across sectors. When informed by academic research, the game industry becomes more resilient—producing games that are not only **technologically up to date** but also **socially relevant**.

Collaboration with researchers and subject-matter experts also helps ensure that games, are grounded in fact while remaining compelling and creative. This enhances their narrative strength and **credibility**. Likewise, educational and serious games benefit from the technical and artistic advancements of the entertainment game industry, becoming more **engaging and impactful**. Conversely, entertainment games can also carry educational and social value, promoting knowledge, skills development, or even behavioral change.

The collaboration between the game industry, research, and education holds immense potential to create games with meaningful societal, educational, and cultural impact. These partnerships enrich skill development, align academic output with industry needs, and offer new formats for storytelling, dialogue, and civic engagement. Games can transcend entertainment, becoming tools for learning, empathy, behavior change, and policy influence.

Effective models for collaboration already exist—such as semester-based programs, joint workshops, game jams, cultural hubs, and hybrid networking events—that demonstrate how different sectors can successfully work together. These initiatives promote interdisciplinary thinking, real-world application to address cross-sectorial challenges, and shared ownership across institutions and generations.

However, for these efforts to scale and sustain, there is a growing need for dedicated public funding streams that support cross-sector game initiatives. Strengthening media literacy and game-based education will further empower citizens to participate and benefit from this ecosystem. Structural challenges that must be addressed include the undervaluing of practice-based outputs in academia, logistical complexities, and misaligned workflows across sectors. Engagement gaps—especially with younger and marginalized groups—also remain a barrier to inclusive participation.



Despite these hurdles, there are clear opportunities to build on what we already have. **Remote work** practices and **accessible co-creation tools** can provide fertile ground for innovation. Additionally, **Europe's rich cultural heritage** is a great source that can encourage collaborations. Strengthening **equal and transformative partnerships**, **empowering underrepresented voices**, and creating **inclusive, real-world spaces for co-creation** can help overcome current divides. By investing in these opportunities, we can foster a more connected, creative, and impactful ecosystem where games serve not just as entertainment, but as catalysts for societal change.

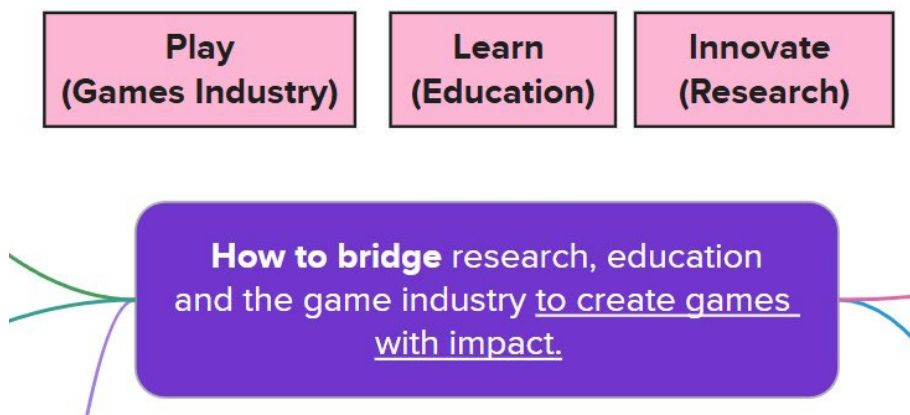
A reflection question for workshop participants and readers of this document:

**What's one takeaway or action point you want to pursue after this workshop?**

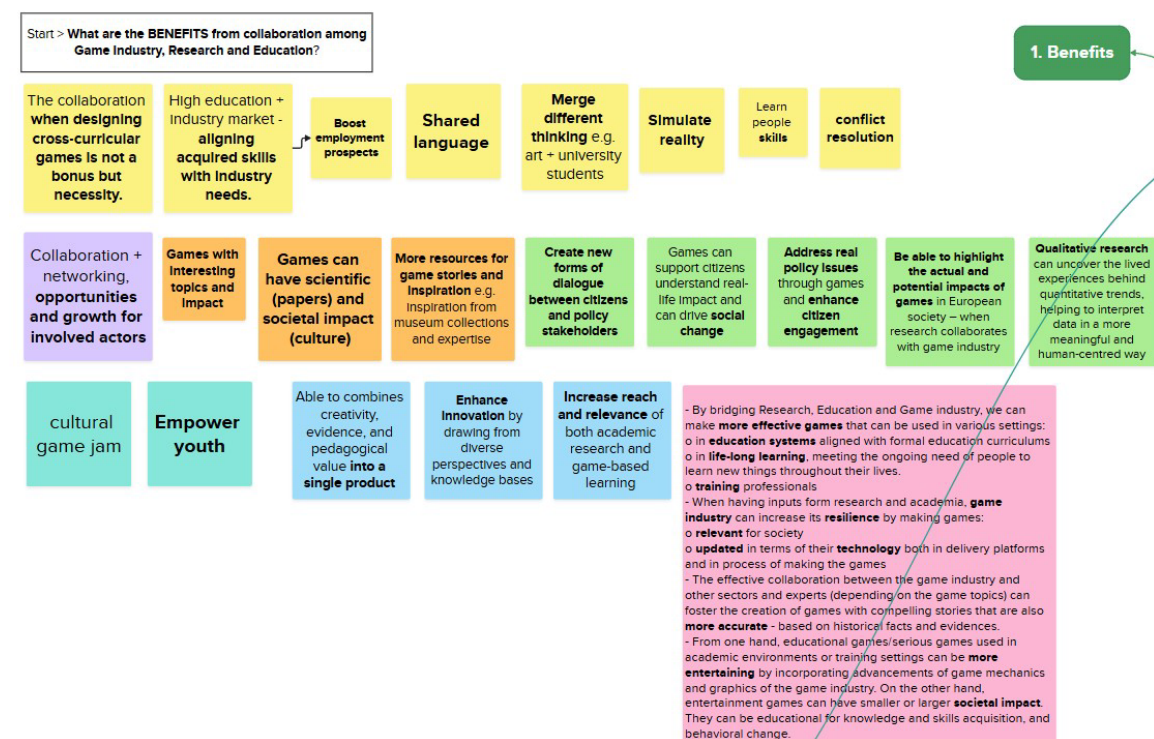


## Appendix – Mind map

### Overall question



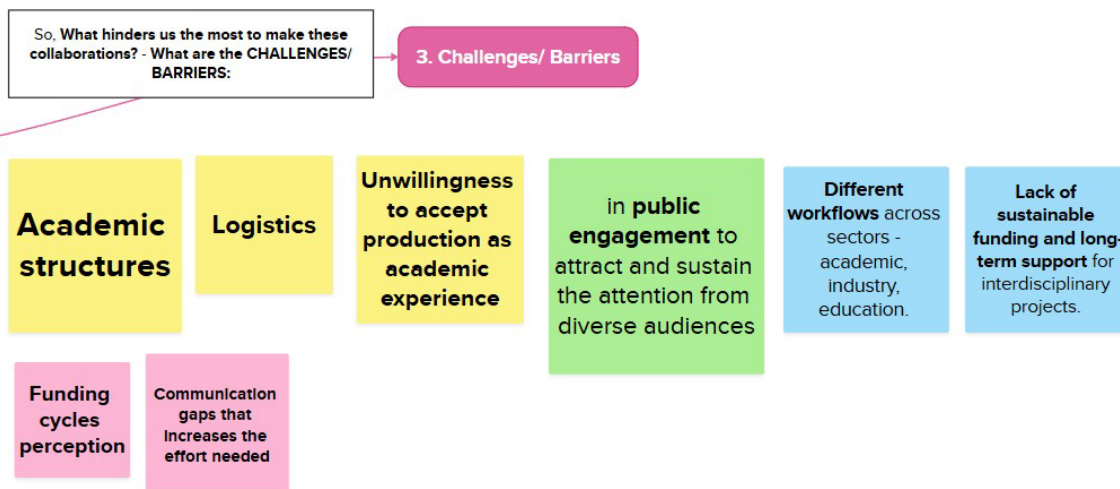
### Benefits



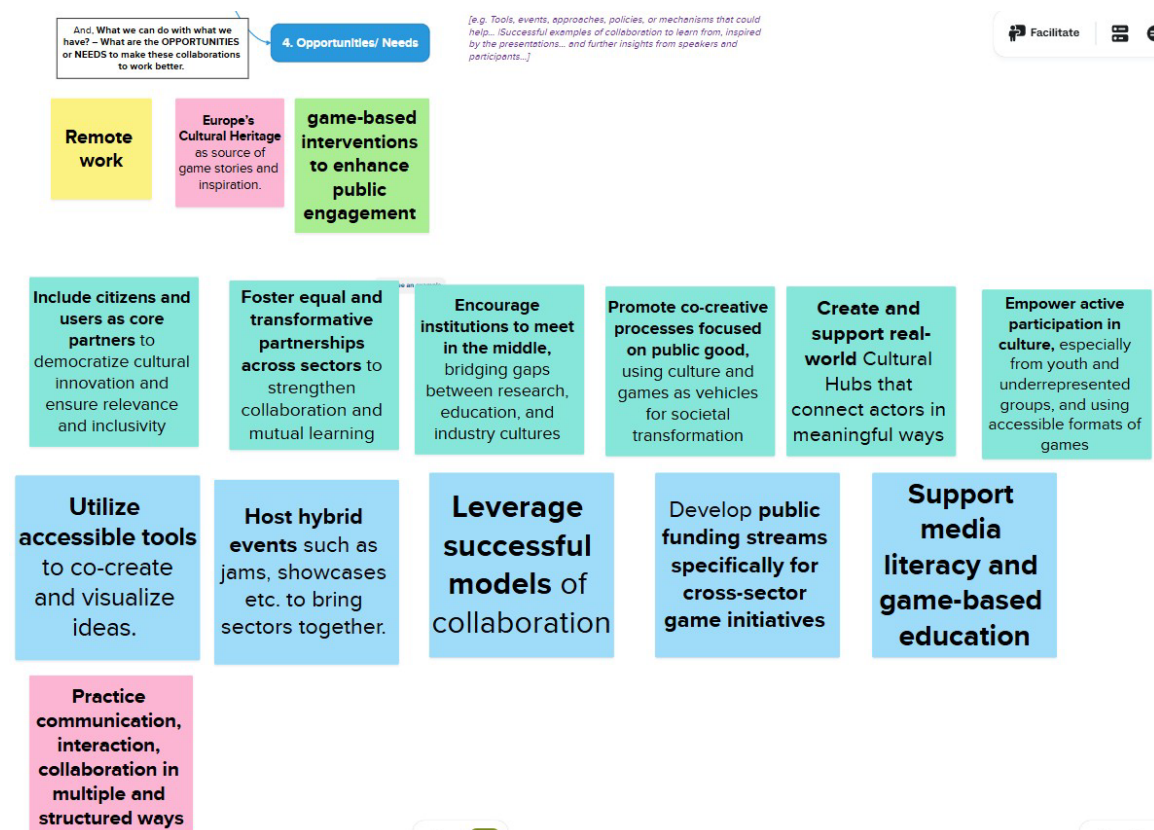
## Collaboration models



## Challenges/Barriers



## Opportunities/Needs



## Reflections

# Reflections

### 5. Recommendations

Finally, Do we have any **RECOMMENDATIONS** that we could suggest in relevant stakeholders/policy-makers for the future?

*[Let's say that we do our best and we improve our collaboration. Still we will have some actions that would be out of our control – what we would suggest to the policy makers to support our efforts?]*

What We Can Do (Universities, Educators, Game Studios)

What We Need from Policy-Makers (Recommendations)

What's one takeaway or action point you would to pursue after this workshop?



Funded by  
the European Union

The projects participating in the Games for Culture Cluster have received funding from the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.