Indie Dev' Guide
Funding your Prototype

Introduction

One of the key issues facing start-up game developer companies, is how to raise the finance needed to develop a prototype. A fortunate few have the finances to develop their prototype. The majority need to raise finances externally to enable them to afford the costs of developing a prototype, with the hope that this leads on to obtaining a deal with a publisher.

Raising finance

The first step in raising the finance you need is preparing a business plan. A business plan is a written document that describes your business, its objectives, strategies, sales, marketing and financial forecasts. A business plan helps you to clarify your business idea, identify potential problems, set out your goals and measure your progress.

A major part of your business plan will be working out how much capital you require to develop your prototype. You will need to consider the budget required to cover a wide range of costs including equipment, office rent, wages, sub-contractor charges and day to day running costs of the business, while the prototype is being developed and assuming a deal is then agreed with the publisher, for the period the game is under development.

At the prototype stage of development it is important that you aim to keep costs to a bare minimum.

Once your business plan is ready, it is time to start trying to raise funds. The following are a number of options you could try:

- Borrow from family and friends
- Approach angel investor groups or Venture Capitalists
- Try approaching individual investors who may have an interest in your prototype
- Use personal savings, which will at least demonstrate your commitment
- Apply for business loans
- Use credit cards
- Do freelance work on the side
- Seek workers who are willing to volunteer their time for free or are willing to work for a revenue share should the game be a success
- Apply to the UK Games Fund
- Apply to Creative England
- Apply to the Art Council