NuGamers Toolkit

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Introduction

This Toolkit represents the practical application of the Nugamers Handbook.

It provides educators and trainers with a set of tools designed to help them address the challenges that girls and women may encounter in gaming education and the gaming industry. The Toolkit follows the same structure as the Handbook, covering the following areas:

- Engaging Girls in Game Development
- Challenges and Solutions in Education
- Job Seeking and Empowering Girls to Compete in the Game Industry Job Market

At the end of the document, a summary is provided, including a list of the digital resources used in all the activities that make up the Toolkit.

Click on the title of the activity to be automatically redirected to it.

Engaging Girls in Game Development	**Challenges and Solutions in Education**	**Job Seeking and Empowering Girls to Compete in the Game Industry Job Market**
Showcasing the game developers' roles	Brave spaces	Show your power: - Build your digital presence - Pitch yourself!
Career reality check (family workshop)	Co-design a common agreement with the class	Negotiation
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1. Engaging Girls in Game Development

Cultural and societal biases often depict gaming and game development as male-dominated fields, which can discourage girls from pursuing these interests. In Europe, 46.7% of video gamers are women, yet only 23.7% of the jobs in the game industry are held by women. Therefore, many girls experience self-doubt and imposter syndrome, questioning their abilities and whether they truly belong in such spaces.

This section aims to provide activities which inspire curiosity, widen knowledge about the different careers and competences related with the game sector, raise awareness of bias and stereotypes, and start playing with roles in game design.

Showcasing the Game Developers' roles	
GOAL	• **Expose participants** to the **real-world diversity of careers** in game development through firsthand stories from women in the industry. • **Inspire curiosity** about roles beyond programming, such as art, sound design, narrative, production, and marketing. • **Encourage self-reflection** on how participants' skills and passions align with potential careers in game dev. **Impact:** • Participants will **gain awareness** of the wide range of opportunities in the industry. • They will **identify roles** that resonate with their interests and feel empowered to explore them further.
BEFORE STARTING	When people think of game development, the first image that comes to mind is often a programmer writing code. But making games is a team effort — involving artists, writers, sound designers, producers, marketers, and many others. The message is: Whether you love storytelling, visual design, music, organization, or tech — there's a place for you in game dev. Exploring careers in game development can feel overwhelming for students who often think only of programming or playing. Showcasing is designed to broaden their perspective, presenting real voices and stories from women in the industry. Videos and podcasts make the activity engaging and authentic, helping participants imagine themselves in roles they may never have considered. Before starting, it is important to ensure that everyone can access the internet and understand English, since the resources are in that language. If needed, facilitators should provide translated summaries or key terms to support comprehension. The teacher's role is to guide curiosity, not to provide answers: they should encourage participants to reflect on what resonates with them, and reassure them that there are no "wrong" choices or

	interests. This activity works best when introduced as an opportunity to discover unexpected paths, not as a test of existing knowledge.

HOW	**Activity Steps (Self-Guided):**
	
	1. **Watch the Video (15 min):**
	  ○ Start by watching Games Industry Career map.
	  ○ Take notes on:
	  ■ **3 roles** that caught your attention.
	  ■ **1 skill or task** associated with each role that surprises or excites you.
	2. **Listen to the Podcasts (30–45 min):**
	  ○ Choose **2–3 episodes** from the NuGamers Podcast Series featuring women in game dev.
	  ○ For each episode, reflect on:
	  ■ What does this person **actually do** in their job?
	  ■ What **skills or experiences** helped them get there?
	  ■ What **challenges or rewards** do they mention?
	3. **Reflect & Connect (20 min):**
	  ○ Answer the following questions in a journal or digital document:
	  ■ Which role(s) from the video or podcasts **align with your skills or passions**? Why?
	  ■ What **misconceptions** about game dev careers did you have before this activity?
	  ■ What **questions** do you still have about working in the game industry?
	4. **Explore Further (Optional, 15+ min):**
	  ○ Pick one of the roles mentioned in the YouTube video that interests you and do a bit of research to explore it more deeply. This step is optional but highly encouraged if you're curious about where your interests might lead in the game industry.
	
	Research Prompts:
	
	● What tools or software are used in this role?
	(Example: Unity or Unreal for programmers, Blender for 3D artists, FMOD for sound designers, Trello for producers)
	
	● What do professionals in this role actually do day-to-day?
	
	● What educational paths or skills are recommended?
	(Example: College programs, online courses, self-taught portfolios, mentorships, YouTube tutorials, game jams)
	
	● Are there communities or events where you could meet others in this role?
	(Example: Women in Games, Discord servers, Reddit communities, local meetups, global game jams)
	
	Advice for Smart Research:
	
	✅ Use multiple sources: Try a mix of articles, videos, and real portfolios (LinkedIn or ArtStation) to get a well-rounded view.

	✅ Look for job postings: Sites like Hitmarker or ArtStation show real job descriptions. Even if you're not applying yet, this shows what skills are valued. ✅ Follow professionals online: Find people in the role on LinkedIn or YouTube and see what they share about their work. ✅ Use keywords: When searching, try terms like: ○ "Day in the life of a game [role]" ○ "[Role] game dev tools" ○ "How to become a game [role]" ○ "Beginner resources for [role] in games" Write down **one actionable step** you could take to learn more (e.g., try a free tutorial, join a forum, or sketch a game concept).
TIME	***Total Duration:*** *60–90 minutes (flexible, self-paced)* ● *Watching the video: 15 min* ● *Listening to podcasts: 30–45 min* ● *Reflection and research: 20–30 min*
MATERIAL NEEDED	● **For Educators/Facilitators:** ○ Provide a guided worksheet with the reflection questions to help participants structure their notes. ○ Create a **shared document or forum** to be shared with a QR code at the beginning of the workshop (e.g., Padlet, Google Doc) where participants can post their insights and see others' responses.
TIPS	● **For Participants:** Pause and rewind the podcasts to **take detailed notes** on roles that inspire you. ● **Adapt for Groups:** ○ If used in a workshop, allocate time for participants to **discuss their findings** in small groups after completing the activity. ● **Accessibility:** ○ Ensure the video and podcasts have **subtitles/transcripts** for participants with hearing impairments. ○ Make sure that all participants have a sufficient level of English comprehension. If necessary, prepare a translated summary or key terms in the local language. ○ Offer a **text summary** of key roles from the video for quick reference. The video has not the subtitles, you can prepare a transcript in advance or the summary. ● **Follow-Up:** ○ Suggest joining **communities** like Women in Games to connect with professionals. ● **Recommendation for the trainer:** ○ check that all video and podcast links work; download them in advance if the internet connection is unstable. ○ Prepare headphones or speakers for listening and provide paper/notebooks and pens for note-taking.

	○ Internet access: verify that all participants can connect reliably (Wi-Fi, hotspot, or offline download as backup). ○ Space: set up a quiet environment, free from distractions

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Career reality check (family workshop)	
GOAL	Help families and students understand the diversity of career opportunities in the gaming industry and overcome concerns about job stability by engaging them in a playful, informative workshop.
BEFORE STARTING	Parents and families often carry stereotypes about games and careers in the gaming industry. Career reality check is designed to address these concerns directly, showing the diversity and stability of professional roles through playful, collaborative activities. The aim is not only to inform students, but also to engage families in seeing the real opportunities behind the screen. Before starting, the facilitator should collect local data and examples: salary surveys, national industry figures, or profiles of professionals that parents can relate to. Having these resources at hand makes the activity credible and impactful. It is also important to anticipate scepticism: families may arrive doubtful, so humour, role-play, and real-life stories are key to keeping the atmosphere open and constructive. The facilitator should prepare to act as a mediator, encouraging both parents and students to contribute equally. The workshop works best when it is framed as a collective discovery, where myths are challenged together and replaced with concrete, inspiring facts.
HOW	**1. Introduction (10 min)** ● The facilitator welcomes families and explains the goal: to explore game careers, bust myths, and see transferable skills. ● Quick icebreaker: Ask families to name the first 3 jobs they think exist in gaming. Write on the board. **2. Career Cards Activity (20 min)** ● Hand out Career Cards (below). Each family/group gets 2–3 random cards. ● Their mission: prepare a mini-pitch (3 min) convincing others why this career is valuable, stable, and future-proof. They can act it out, draw a poster, or simply explain. **3. Group Presentations (20 min)** ● Each family/group shares its pitch with everyone. Encourage humour and creativity. **4. Myth Busting Facts (10 min)** Facilitator presents real data: ● Industry size (global + national) ● Example salaries (using survey links, e.g. Finland Game Makers) ● Women role models in gaming (photos/names). **5. Reflection Wall (15 min)** ● Give everyone sticky notes: “At the start, I thought…” / “Now I know…” ● Stick notes on a “Myth Busting Wall.” **5. Closing (5 min)** Facilitator thanks participants, highlights that gaming careers are diverse, and skills are transferable.
TIME	~80 minutes
MATERIALS	● Printed **Career Cards** (below). ● Sticky notes & markers.

- Flipchart/board.
- Projector (optional, for industry data/role model slides).
- Optional props for role-plays (toy microphone, hats, markers).

Where teachers can search for gaming sector data

1. **Global industry reports (simplified summaries are often free):**
    - Newzoo – Global Games Market → leading source on market size, revenues, gamer numbers.
    - Statista → quick statistics and charts (some free, some behind paywall).
    - Reuters – Gaming articles → reliable news on market shifts and big launches.
2. **Education-friendly sources:**
    - UNESCO → occasionally publishes reports on digital games in learning and culture.
    - European Commission – Digital Economy & Society → broader data on digital skills, often with gaming references.
3. **National/regional data:**
    - **National statistical offices** (e.g. UK's ONS, Croatia's DZS, Germany's Destatis) → often track ICT, media, or cultural industries, including gaming.
    - **Game developer associations** (e.g. ISFE – Interactive Software Federation of Europe, ESA – Entertainment Software Association, USA) → publish annual fact sheets with national/regional numbers.
4. **Classroom-usable insights (student focus):**
    - Pew Research Center – Gaming & Teens → easy-to-digest data on who plays and how.
    - Global Gamer Study – Newzoo → profiles of gamers (motivations, habits, attitudes).

Women Role Models in Gaming

- **Jade Raymond** – Canadian game producer, known for founding Ubisoft Toronto and leading development of the *Assassin's Creed* series.
- **Amy Hennig** – American writer and game director, best known for the *Uncharted* series, a leader in storytelling in games.
- **Brenda Romero** – Award-winning game designer with a career spanning 40+ years, also an advocate for diversity in gaming.
- **Kiki Wolfkill** – Executive Producer at 343 Industries, responsible for the *Halo* franchise.
- **Siobhan Reddy** – Studio Director at Media Molecule (*LittleBigPlanet*, *Dreams*), BAFTA award winner.

	• **Carol Shaw** – One of the first female game designers and programmers, known for *River Raid* (Atari, 1982). • **Dona Bailey** – Co-creator of *Centipede* (Atari, 1981), one of the earliest arcade classics designed by a woman. • **Kim Swift** – Lead designer of *Portal*, influential in puzzle game design and interactive storytelling. **TEMPLATES – Career Cards (paste in a A4 paper, print & cut)** 1. **Programmer** – Writes the code that makes games work. *Skills: logical thinking, coding, problem-solving.* 2. **Narrative Designer** – Creates the story, characters, and dialogue. *Skills: writing, creativity, teamwork.* 3. **Game Artist** – Designs visuals, characters, and environments. *Skills: drawing, visual design.* 4. **Sound Designer/Composer** – Creates music and sound effects. *Skills: music, creativity.* 5. **Producer** – Manages schedules and teams. *Skills: leadership, organisation.* 6. **QA Tester** – Finds bugs and ensures quality. *Skills: patience, detail focus.* 7. **Community Manager** – Connects players and developers. *Skills: communication, empathy.* 8. **UX Designer** – Ensures the game is fun and accessible. *Skills: design thinking, empathy.*
TIPS	Schools can run this during orientation days; youth clubs can host it as a family workshop. Engages parents, reduces scepticism, and builds shared excitement. **Keep it playful:** Families sometimes come in with scepticism. Use humour and role-play to keep the atmosphere light instead of lecturing them. **Use local data:** Parents respond well to concrete facts. Show national salary surveys, local game studios, or job ads in your country. (e.g. https://map.gamebadges.eu/) **Balance roles in groups:** If parents dominate, ask students to lead the pitches — this shifts the perspective and empowers the young. **Prepare for misconceptions:** Be ready for comments like “this isn’t a stable career.” Have quick counter-facts or success stories on hand. **Visuals help:** Print posters of women/men from diverse roles in gaming. Seeing real faces makes the careers feel more “real.” **Accessibility:** If time is short, reduce the number of cards per family (1 instead of 2–3) and skip the reflection wall.
MATERIALS	Cards to be printed out

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Discovering Careers in the Games Industry	
GOAL	To broaden students' understanding of career opportunities in the games industry, showing how diverse skills (art, writing, coding, sound, communication) contribute to game creation. The activity promotes teamwork, peer learning, and appreciation of non-traditional roles, especially for students who may not see themselves as "coders."
HOW	Students work in groups using the jigsaw method. Start with a short warm-up discussion on what jobs they think exist in the games industry, followed by a short One Minute Mentor (OMM) video created by Digital Schoolhouse. The full playlist is available here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA8lfpEv0vOvo5f78SHdtb3UgAsWfYnpR Students are then placed in "Home Teams" of 4–5, then move into "Expert Teams," where each group focuses on one role: Game Artist/Designer, Game Writer, Programmer, Sound Designer, or Marketing Manager. Each Expert Team receives a one-page fact sheet with a role description, real-life examples, and a short hands-on task (e.g., sketching a character, writing a quest, mapping controls, brainstorming a soundtrack, inventing a slogan). After 20 minutes, students return to their Home Teams and share what they learned. Together, they create a new game concept using a simple "Game Concept Canvas" (template provided), combining story, gameplay, visuals, sound, and promotion. The session ends with short group presentations and a reflection on what they discovered about the industry and their own interests. **Warm-up & Ice breaker (10–15 min)** ● Quick poll: "When you think of jobs in the games industry, what comes to mind?" (facilitator writes answers on the board, usually "programmer" and "tester" dominate). ● Video spark (2–3 mins): A short One Minute Mentor (OMM) video created by Digital Schoolhouse. The full playlist is available here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA8lfpEv0vOvo5f78SHdtb3UgAsWfYnpR ● Surprise fact drops: Share 2–3 unexpected jobs (e.g. voice actor, narrative designer, esports manager). This website can be used as a good resource: https://www.screenskills.com/job-profiles/browse/games/ **Main Activity – The Game Creation Team (50 min)** **Step 1 – Home Teams (5 min)** ● Students sit in small teams (4–5 people). Each member will become the "expert" in one role. **Step 2 – Expert Teams (20 min)** ● Students move into "Expert Teams" by role: ○ Game Artist / Designer ○ Game Writer / Storyteller ○ Programmer / Developer ○ Sound Designer / Composer ○ Marketing & Community Manager ● Each Expert Team gets a 1-page Role Card (available below) with: ○ Short description of the role ○ Real-world examples ○ A mini hands-on challenge, e.g.: ■ Artist → sketch a quick character or environment

- Writer → invent a short quest or dialogue line
- Programmer → map basic controls (up = jump, etc.)
- Sound → choose a "mood" and list 3 real-life sounds that could fit (e.g. spooky forest, space battle)
- Marketing → invent a short game slogan or social media post

- Students complete the challenge on paper in their group.

Step 3 – Back to Home Teams (25 min)

- Each student teaches their role to their Home Team.
- As a group, they design a new game concept using all roles.
- They use a simple Game Concept Canvas (A3 handout with 5 boxes: Story, Gameplay, Art/Visuals, Sound, Promotion).

Show & Reflect (15 min)

- Pick 2–3 groups to pitch their game idea in 1 minute.
- Reflection questions (whole class discussion):
  - "Which role did you enjoy most?"
  - "What surprised you about creating games?"
  - "How could games be used for good — education, culture, or solving problems?"

Tools & Materials

- Printed Role Cards (1 page each with fact + mini-activity)
- Printed Game Concept Canvas (A3 or A4 handout)
- Markers, blank paper, post-its
- Projector / screen for video (optional)

Role Cards

1. Game Artist / Designer

What do they do?

- Create characters, environments, and visual style.
- Decide how the game looks and feels.
- Work with programmers and writers to make the world believable.

Real-world example: Think of *Minecraft*'s blocky style vs. *Fortnite*'s cartoon look - both were design choices.

Mini-challenge (5 min):
Draw a quick sketch of a main character or environment for a new game. Don't worry about details. Focus on the *style* (cute, scary, futuristic, etc.).

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2. Game Writer / Storyteller

What do they do?

- Create the story, characters, and dialogue.
- Write quests, missions, or narrative choices.
- Work with designers to match story with gameplay.

Real-world example: In *Undertale*, player choices change the story completely.

Mini-challenge (5 min):
Invent a short quest or dialogue line for a game. Example: “A villager asks for help finding their lost robot in the forest.”

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3. Programmer / Developer

What do they do?

- Write the code that makes the game work.
- Turn designs, art, and sound into a playable experience.
- Fix bugs and make sure everything runs smoothly.

Real-world example: Platformers like *Super Mario* depend on carefully coded jump physics.

Mini-challenge (5 min):
Design a simple control scheme for your game:

- Which button makes the character move, jump, or interact?
- Add one special action (e.g. teleport, dance, power-up).

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4. Sound Designer / Composer

What do they do?

- Create music, sound effects, and voice work.
- Set the mood and atmosphere.
- Help players feel emotions (fear, excitement, calm).

Real-world example: The music in *Pokémon* changes between a friendly town and a tense battle.

Mini-challenge (5 min):
Pick a setting (e.g. spooky cave, space battle, magical forest). List 3 sounds or music styles that would match.

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5. Marketing & Community Manager

What do they do?

- Promote the game so people hear about it.
- Make trailers, social media posts, and posters.
- Connect with players, listen to feedback, and build a fan community.

Real-world example: *Among Us* became famous because fans shared memes and streamers promoted it.

Mini-challenge (5 min):
Invent a slogan or short ad for your game. Example: *“Save the galaxy… before it saves you!”*

	Game Concept Canvas (Template) Title of Game: _____ 1. Story / World ● What is the setting? ● Who are the main characters? ● What's the goal or conflict? 2. Gameplay & Mechanics ● How does the player interact? ● What's fun or unique about it? 3. Visual Style (Art) ● How does the game look? (cartoon, realistic, pixel art, etc.) ● Example sketch space: 4. Sound & Music ● What kind of atmosphere does the sound create? ● Example sounds / music style: 5. Promotion / Marketing ● Who is the target audience? ● Slogan, hashtag, or poster idea
TIME	90 minutes (15 min introduction, 50 min jigsaw activity, 15 min sharing & reflection).
TIPS	Prepare the Role Cards and Game Concept Canvas in advance, so the teacher doesn't need extra knowledge about gaming careers. Allow flexibility in group size (3–6) depending on class numbers. If technology is limited, all activities can be done on paper with markers. Encourage quick sketches and ideas rather than polished results. Creativity and collaboration are the focus. If some students are shy, let groups present by showing their canvas rather than speaking. For older or more advanced groups, you can include additional roles (producer, tester, streamer) to expand perspectives.

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Bias Card Game	
GOAL	The Bias Card Game helps students **become aware** of the unconscious biases that influence our decisions, behaviours, and interactions with others at work. By naming and exploring these biases, we open space for curiosity, self-reflection, and mutual understanding, also out of the class context. The game supports teams in building more inclusive, thoughtful, and bias-aware ways of collaborating.
BEFORE STARTING	Learning about bias doesn't have to be heavy: it can be engaging, playful, and thought-provoking. **Biases** are mental shortcuts our brain uses to process information quickly. They help us make decisions fast but can lead to **unfair or inaccurate judgments**. Some biases are conscious, but many operate unconsciously without us realizing it. **They affect how we see people, interpret situations, and make choices**. Understanding bias is the first step toward making more thoughtful, adequate, and inclusive decisions. Bias Cards are organized in 4 clusters: Decision making, Evaluation of reality, Information, Me and the others. During the process, **the teacher takes on the role of facilitator**, guiding students through each phase, assigning roles, respecting timetables, and managing eventual judgmental or disrespectful situations. Specific **expertise** in bias is preferable, due to the final part, when the teacher is supposed to offer feedback, reflections and questions. Just before starting the game, we invite the teacher to explain the "**pact**" with the class: during the game no judgement or disrespectful assertion will be allowed. Focus on the content and not on the person who spoke. Participants can be from a minimum of 6, to a maximum of 20.
HOW	Phases of Bias Card Game: 1. **Introduction** Explain to the class that we are going to do a game about Bias, using Cards. Create a circle of chairs. 2. **Debaters** Ask for 3 (if the class is composed of 6 people) or no more than 4 volunteers (when the class is up to 20 people). They are going to be the "debaters", but do not tell them. Assure them that they are not going to perform anything complicated, or dangerous: ask them to wait out of the room for 3 minutes. You are going to call them back in. 3. **Listeners** While the group of debaters is out of the class, distribute to the others (the Listeners) the Bias Cards. Each of them contains the Name of the Bias, its brief description and an Example. Organize Listeners in groups of two and give to each couple from 3 to 4 Bias Cards (depending on the class numbers), from different clusters. Let the couples read individually the Bias they have on their cards and check for understanding. If there is any trouble in comprehension, supply additional explanations and examples to the specific Bias. Finally, explain to them that they will have to listen to the Debaters while they debate, and take note when the Bias on their Cards are activated.

	4. Debate Invite Debaters in, in the centre of the circle, and sit on chairs. Thank them for their volunteering and reassure them that their contribution is fundamental for the awareness about the topic. None of the others (the Listeners) are going to blame or judge what they do or say: they will just listen. Now launch the question they must debate. It should be something that may open to different arguments, not something to which students can just respond with a "yes" or "no". For example, you can use a question as "What do you think about generational differences?", or "Social digital platforms exert pressure and influence on political debate and elections. Do you agree? Should National States intervene? Why?" **5. Check for Bias** First, explain to the Debaters what Listeners were supposed to do while they were debating. Then, ask the Listeners, couple by couple, if any bias was activated, with the precise sentence and the moment of the debate when it came out. When a bias comes out, ask if they act in that way also in their daily life (this helps in anchoring the consciousness to something they know or they perform) **6. Conclusions** In conclusion, if there is any question, the teacher answers, and may stimulate debate asking for examples in students' life, to better understand some bias, and invite them to imagine some hack, or way to manage them.
TIME	Here is a **suggested schedule for a 2-hour workshop**: - Introduction (topic and learning goal): 15 minutes - Debaters: 5 minutes - Listeners: 10 minutes - Debate: 20 minutes - Check for biases: 30 minutes - Conclusions: 40 minutes
TIPS	● Links to insightful websites about Biases: ○ Bias inside us, by Smithsonian Institution ○ Thinking, Fast and Slow, by Kahneman (Wikipedia) ○ Bias Mega Wheel ○ Bias and Fallacies clusters, by The School of Thought ● When it comes to asking Debaters, care about gender balance. If 4 on 4 volunteers are male (their social education could reinforce their self-confidence, respect female students), thank them but ask for at least 2 students with different gender. ● Tell the Listeners to check if any of the Debaters quote any scientific paper, or statistic, to legitimize their opinion. If they don't, usually their sentences will be biased in various ways. When you ask Listeners if any of the Card was activated, underline in what part of the dialogue a statistic could be helpful but not quoted, to make them aware of the importance of being evidence-based. ● At the end of the debate, give Listeners 2-3 minutes to share their comments, and then start the Check for Bias session. ● During the debate, make sure that each of the Debaters is expressing their point of view. and that the time the talk is equal. ● During the Check for Bias, tell the class that it is absolutely normal if a lot of Biases popped up, because it's the way our brain evolved during the last hundreds of thousands of years. They helped us to survive, but now, in our contemporary society, sometimes they could be misleading and counter productive.
DOWNLOAD	Here you can download the Bias Card Game.

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Serious Game Design	
GOAL	Helping students **understand the wide range of skills involved in game design** while strengthening key soft skills such as creative thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving.
BEFORE STARTING	A serious game is a real game - it includes all the core elements of traditional gameplay (goal, rules, challenges, etc.) - but with an added purpose: **to educate or raise awareness about specific issues**. In educational contexts, Serious Game Design **can be applied to virtually any topic under discussion or exploration**, from climate change to gender equality. During the process, **the teacher takes on the role of facilitator**, guiding students through each phase and offering feedback rather than evaluating the outcomes. No specific expertise in game design is required: the process is designed so that teachers and students can learn together.
HOW	**Phases of Serious Game Design:** 1. 📖 **The Topic (20 min)** What is the purpose of the serious game? Is it to deepen knowledge - e.g. explore a historical event - or raise awareness - e.g. around climate change? Clarifying the game's educational goal helps narrow the topic and gives direction to the next brainstorming phase. 2. 🤯 **Brainstorming (20 min)** Participants work in small groups (ideally no more than 6 per group) to generate ideas. The aim of the brainstorming is to define: - *the game environment* (the narrative setting) - *the goal* (what a player must do to win) - *the challenge* (obstacles that make achieving the goal engaging). 3. ⚙️ **Prototyping (40 min)** Using simple materials (paper, markers, post-its, etc.), students build the first version of their game. At this stage they clarify: - *the mechanics* (actions players take to move the game forward) - *the rules* (what players can and cannot do) - *the components* (physical or visual elements needed to play). 4. 👁️ **Testing (60 minutes, 30 minutes per group)** Groups are paired and test each other's games. Players observe how the game unfolds, take note of obstacles or unclear elements, and collect direct feedback from testers. 5. 🤔 **Retrospective (20 min)** Based on direct observation and feedback, groups reflect on what needs to be improved - e.g. unclear rules, imbalanced difficulty, or confusing mechanics. 6. 🔄 **Iteration (20 min)** Groups return to brainstorming, choosing one or two elements to improve and adjusting their prototype accordingly.
TIME	The overall duration of the activity depends on various factors: the complexity of the game to be developed, the number of participants, and the number of iterations in the process. Here is a **suggested schedule for a 3-hour workshop**: - Introduction (topic and learning goal): 20 minutes - Brainstorming: 20 minutes - Prototyping: 40 minutes - Testing: 60 minutes (30 minutes per group) - Retrospective: 20 minutes

	- Iteration: 20 minutes
TIPS	● If participants or the facilitator are new to game design, it is advisable to **keep the games simple**, focusing on basic mechanics and minimal rules. ● Before starting the activity, it is useful to **help students understand the elements that make up a game**, by identifying them in some games of their choice. For example, these are the elements of Game of the Goose: *Goal: Reach space 63 first with an exact roll.* *Challenge: Some spaces (the Hazard spaces) hinder the player's progress, for example by making them lose a turn, sending them back to the starting space, or trapping them until another player comes to release them.* *Mechanics: Players take turns rolling two dice and move forward accordingly.* *Rules: If a piece lands on a space with a picture of a goose, it moves forward by the same amount again; If a piece lands on a Hazard space, that piece must follow the stated rule, etc.* *Components: A spiral shaped board consisting of 63 spaces; Four differently coloured pieces in the shape of a goose; Two six-sided dice.* ● Encourage students to share **as many ideas as possible during brainstorming**. A democratic method (e.g. writing one idea per post-it and voting) can help every voice be heard. ● Remind participants that **game design is about learning through failure**. A good game emerges through iteration: discovering what doesn't work, making improvements, and growing through the process.

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2. Challenges and Solutions in Education

While studying game development, girls and women may encounter very impactful key challenges: lack of representation, stereotypes, exclusionary practices in their learning environments, gender imbalances.

This section aims to provide activities which foster a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect where all students feel valued and supported, equip girls with the tools and confidence to advocate for themselves and others in professional spaces.

Brave Spaces	
GOAL	These are the guidelines for creating a **brave space together with the class**. The concept of brave space is a step further from the traditional safe space. **Brave space encourages everyone to engage constructively.** The ultimate goal is to create a space that promotes an individual's growth, not by erasing discomfort, but creating a space that provides the chance to step out of one's comfort zone.
HOW	The teacher should lead the conversation about what kind of rules the group wants to set for their own brave space and make sure everyone understands the guidelines that the group creates. The conversation should be done as **a full group**. The teacher has to make sure **everyone has a chance to speak their mind**. The rules should be **written down as the conversation progresses**. Anyone can **make amendments** to them at any point and the group has to collectively agree to them. The teacher should stress that in a brave space, individuals are encouraged to share their viewpoints, but they must respect everyone else's experiences and feelings. **An open dialogue without judgement is the most important thing to set in a brave space.** A brave space **doesn't have to be "active" all the time**, but it works especially with challenging topics or when the dialogue needs encouragement. As an example, the teacher can share these guidelines to give an idea to the students about what kind of space they are creating together: 1. Help each other grow. 2. Remember confidentiality. 3. Actively listen. These bullet points should be visible to the participants to facilitate the conversation: In brave spaces, it is encouraged to: ● Ask questions when seeking understanding of another person's viewpoint. ● Use "I" statements, speak from your own perspective. ● Give room for others to speak. ● Strive to leave one's own comfort zone. ● Challenge others respectfully and remember the topic is being challenged, not the person. ● Speak up even if the thought is incomplete. ● Recognize and share your privileges to understand everyone's point of view better. ● Understand what is your own truth and that it is acceptable to only acknowledge other peoples' truths and still hold on to your own.

	The group should consider their **views of on these questions and make up to 10 rules** based on them: 1. In what kind of situations should brave space be active in this instance? 2. What degree of confidentiality does the group want for their brave space? 3. How does the group and every individual make sure everyone actively listens? 4. What is the state of everyone having their mind changed about things? Are they open or prejudiced? 5. What kind of group dynamic does the group have? Can it interfere with the groundwork of brave space? 6. How do we make sure everyone has the chance to share their thoughts?
TIME	It is recommended to create the brave space guidelines and discuss when it would be relevant to use them at the start of a course or a project with the participants. Ample time for discussion should be allowed and this can vary by group. Time: 45 to 90 minutes.
TIPS	- The most important part of creating a brave space is that everyone understands and agrees to the concept being applied. Students should be encouraged to challenge the idea of brave space and why it is needed as a guideline for interaction in class. - Instead of rules, these can be called brave space guidelines or mechanics. - The class could be set so that everyone is sitting in a circle rather than behind their desks. - The group can be split to smaller groups and each of these makes their own suggestion of rules. In the end all the suggestions are brought together to find similarities and to discuss. - The students shouldn't bring any materials to the activity, no phones or note-taking tools. This will help them focus on the discussion. - The rules could be written on a flipchart by the teacher as the conversation progresses and to take focus away from digital screens. - Coaxing the thoughts out of the more shy and introverted students is also important, so the teacher should follow these students to make sure they have a chance to talk and agree to the rules without putting them on the spot. - This activity works well at the start of a new course group or an orientation week.

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Co-design a common agreement with the class	
GOAL	**Promote equity and inclusion** in STEM learning environments, especially for girls and marginalized genders. **Empower students** to collectively define respectful behaviours and shared values in their classroom. **Build a sense of ownership and accountability** by involving all students in the co-creation of rules and agreements. **Foster empathy, dialogue, and awareness** around gender-based challenges in STEM education.
BEFORE STARTING	**Understand the context**: Be aware of any gender dynamics, stereotypes, or exclusion patterns in your classroom. **Reflect on your own position**: Be prepared to act as a facilitator, not an authority figure - your neutrality and openness are key. **Create a psychologically safe space**: Ensure students know that there will be no judgment and that all voices are valued. **Formulate a working definition of "safe space"** in advance and be ready to explore and revise it with students.
HOW	***1. Kick-off with a stimulus (15–20 min)*** Show a short video, infographic, or personal story (real or anonymized) about gender bias or exclusion in STEM (for example The hidden women of STEM - Alexis Scott | TED-Ed). → **Ask**: *What stood out to you? How would you feel in that situation? Have you seen or experienced something similar?* ***2. Silent individual reflection (5–10 min)*** Ask students to write down: ● What helps me feel safe and confident in class? ● What makes me feel excluded or uncomfortable? ● What would a fair, inclusive classroom looks like? ***3. Small group discussion (15–20 min)*** In diverse small groups, students share ideas and look for common themes. Each group picks 3–5 behaviours or values they believe are essential to a safe STEM space. ***4. Plenary co-creation session (20–30 min)*** ● Create a shared board (physical or digital) where each group presents their points. ● Discuss and negotiate common agreements, merging similar ideas. ● Use consensus or democratic voting to finalize a list of **6–10 core community agreements**. ***5. Naming and committing (10–15 min)***

	• Let the class title their agreement (e.g. “STEM Safe Space Pact”). • Invite everyone to sign or mark it in a way that symbolizes shared commitment. • Decide together where and how it will be displayed or revisited.
TIME	Total time: 90–120 minutes. Can be spread over 2 sessions if needed.
MATERIALS	Sticky notes or digital whiteboard (e.g. Miro, Mural, Padlet) Markers, poster paper, or a shared document to create the final agreement Video or visual material (e.g. The hidden women of STEM - Alexis Scott | TED-Ed)

TIPS	• **Ask open, inclusive questions** like:
	  ○ *“What does respect look like to you?”*
	  ○ *“How can we support everyone to speak and be heard?”*
	  ○ *“What does a ‘safe learning space’ mean in practice?”*
	• **Encourage quieter students** through written reflections, or smaller groups where they may feel more comfortable sharing.
	• **Be ready to challenge harmful stereotypes** or exclusionary ideas calmly, using them as learning moments.
	• **Use circle seating or group clusters** to break classroom hierarchies and foster openness.
	• **Revisit the agreement regularly**, especially before STEM group work or projects, and allow for updates as needed.

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Community Canvas	
GOAL	Establishing **supportive networks**, such as women's groups or clubs for game development. Helping build **stronger communities** and make **people more connected**.
BEFORE STARTING	This tool may allow girls to embark on a **team reflection**: before starting the activities, we recommend creating a **common understanding** of the tool, its goals and how they want to use it.
HOW	The Community Canvas is composed of 3 Sections (Identity, Experience, Structure), which in turn are divided into 17 Themes. This tool could be helpful for girls within a class or also in other social environments, such as activism groups, or goal-oriented teams. Teachers may conduct the fulfillment of the **Community Canvas** using participatory methods that empower (girls) students toward autonomy, but it could also be supplied to girls and make them autonomously work on it, providing for recurring retrospective sessions. For teachers who want to conduct the activities (also valuable as tips for autonomous groups): 1. **Divide students into collaborative groups**, allowing them to co-create a community concept by exploring real needs, shared values, and common goals together. 2. **Encourage storytelling and personal sharing** to help girls connect emotionally with the community they are designing, fostering a sense of ownership and relevance. 3. **Use guided inquiry and reflective questions** to help students unpack each Section (Identity, Experience, Structure) rather than instructing, directly promoting critical and independent thinking. 4. **Visualize ideas collectively** using sticky notes, canvases, or digital tools, making the process dynamic and ensuring that every voice shapes the community vision. 5. **Support iteration and feedback cycles**, empowering students to refine their ideas through peer input and develop confidence in designing sustainable, meaningful communities. **Section One: Identity** The first part of the Canvas focuses on questions of belief. The Identity section itself is layered like an onion. At its core are two elements: the community's purpose and the identity of its members. The questions why and who are quintessential and then inform the other elements of identity: the organization's values, its definition of success and its brand. An authentic culture is one of the most valuable elements of any community, but also a very abstract concept to act upon. The elements covered under Identity are key ingredients towards a thriving community culture. THEMES: - Purpose: Why does the community exist? - Member Identity: Who is the community for? - Values: What is important to us as a community? How can we make this community a safe space? - Success Definition: How does the community define success? - Brand: How does the community express itself? How do we communicate our purpose and values to the outside?

	Section Two: Experience In the second part of the Canvas we explore the community from the perspective of the members: what does happen in the community and how does it translate its purpose into activities that create tangible value for the members? A significant part of the Canvas is dedicated to two elements: Shared Experiences bring members together and fundamentally deepen the bonds among them. Rituals and traditions are individual and recurring experiences that have a strong symbolic character. The community's content strategy contributes to the overall experience. Communities who tell the stories of their members and share relevant content strengthen the bond among members and increase the overall value. Every member is different and evolves over time. Smart communities provide different roles catering to different needs throughout the experience. Lastly, communities work best when they have clear rules set in advance, so people know what their rights and expected responsibilities are. THEMES: - Selection: How do people join the community? - Transition: How do members leave the community? - Shared Experiences: What experiences do members share? - Rituals: What rituals happen regularly? What kind of energy and support do they give to the community? - Content: What content creates value for members? - Rules: What are the community's rules? - Roles: What roles can members play? **Section Three: Structure** The third part of the Canvas focuses on the operational elements of running a community. While many communities evolve organically over time, only few survive in the long-term. Organizational aspects are often neglected, and the necessary structures aren't in place to deal with challenging situations, as they eventually and often suddenly come up. This area goes beyond good management and processes, but presents a tremendous opportunity: most communities become more valuable the longer they exist, as trust among the members increases. But consistency is key. Visionary communities will put structures in place that will optimize for long-term stability. Decision making is best clarified in advance and helps avoid and address conflicts, a surprisingly common sight within many communities. Most successful communities exist both in the offline and the online world, and the choice of the right platforms matter.
TIME	Every section could be explored and fulfilled in 2-3 hours.

MATERIALS	Community Canvas web site: https://community-canvas.org/ Community Canvas is released under Creative Commons license BY-NC-SA 4.0.
TIPS	• Care about the management of the data shared within the Community: commonly decide what data is going to be shared, how and where it will be stored and, if it is the case, how it will be spread. • Support autonomous groups with periodic meetings, where judgement has no space, but mutual support and constructive opinions are welcome (see also below, The Mad Sad Glad Retrospective).

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Soft Skills in action	
GOAL	Stimulating students' experience of diverse roles within a group, **regardless of gender or personal inclination**, thereby fostering the acquisition of new soft skills.
HOW	Soft Skills Cards can be used in any group activity with teams of a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 people. It is meant to be a support for roles division for any kind of group activity. 1. Before starting the group activity, **each participant draws a card**. The role described on the card is the one they will play during the activity. 2. There are 5 cards in the deck, corresponding to the 5 roles of **Guide**, **Supporter**, **Ideator**, **Researcher**, and **Reflector**. If the group has 4 people, the Reflector card can be removed. If the group has more than 5 people, the Ideator card can be duplicated (6 people), followed by the Researcher (7 people), and finally the Supporter (8 people). 3. Here are the Soft Skills Card descriptions (they can be designed and printed by the teacher. What follows are the contents for each card. Each soft skill is paired with a character from the well-known *Harry Potter* saga, helping participants embrace their assigned role in a fun and engaging way): ***The Guide (Harry Potter)*** As the Guide, you're the one who steps up when things get tough, just like Harry. You might not always *want* to be in charge, but you know every group needs inspiration, and this time, you'll be the one providing it! Your main job is to help the team **stay focused on the goal**, make sure **everyone feels included**, and **inspire all to do their best**, especially when facing tricky challenges. ***The Supporter (Ron Weasley)*** You're the glue of the group, much like Ron! Your main power is your loyalty and awesome encouragement. When someone feels down or stuck, you're there to **cheer them on**, **offer a helping hand**, or even **lighten the mood** with some humour. You make sure everyone feels valued and that no one is left behind. Your presence helps the whole team feel stronger and more confident. ***The Ideator (Fred & George Weasley)*** Get ready to unleash your inner Fred and George! Your role is all about sparking new ideas and thinking outside the box. Don't be afraid to suggest wild, unconventional solutions – no idea is too silly! You'll be the one to **brainstorm possibilities**, find **creative ways around obstacles**, and infuse the team with energy and **innovative thinking**. Let those ideas flow! ***The Researcher (Hermione Granger)*** You're the ultimate knowledge-seeker and organizer, just like Hermione! Your main task is to **find the information the team needs**, whether it's facts, figures, or best practices. You'll also be great at **keeping things organized**, **taking notes**, and making sure all the details are covered. You turn questions into answers and chaos into order, making sure the team has everything it needs to succeed. ***The Reflector (Minerva McGonagall)*** You're the wise eye of the group, channelling your inner Professor McGonagall! Your job is to take a step back and observe what's happening. You'll help the team **evaluate their progress**, **spot any potential problems** or things that could be done better, and **make sure everyone is staying on track** and following the plan. You bring clarity and

	help the team learn from their actions.
TIME	Drawing the card and assigning the role takes only a few minutes. The overall activity duration may vary depending on any complementary introductory and/or retrospective activities (see Tips).
TIPS	• The first time the tool is used, it's helpful to dedicate some time to **explore each role in depth**, clarifying its functions and importance within a group, and inviting participants to provide practical examples. • At the end of a group activity where the tool has been used, it's beneficial to **dedicate time to a retrospective**. Ask each participant how they felt playing their role, what they enjoyed most, what they learned, and what they would like to improve in the future, to support greater awareness of soft skills. • For prolonged activities (e.g., a project work spread over several days), it's useful to let participants **experience different roles** by periodically proposing a new round of assignments.

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The Mad Sad Glad Retrospective	
GOAL	Facilitating the **unveiling and free sharing of emotions experienced by participants in a training activity**, identifying potential areas for improvement in a collaborative way.
HOW	1. Before you begin: **clearly explain the objective of the retrospective** to participants, that is to improve the learning environment by welcoming everyone's feedback without judgment. 2. Provide participants with a **tool to leave their feedback anonymously**. This can be an online tool (e.g., Miro board) or an offline one (e.g., boxes for collecting sticky notes or slips of paper). 3. Give participants a few minutes to fill in three sections: **Mad** 😠 - What aspect of the activity just experienced caused the most **anger or frustration** (e.g., things that didn't work, hindered the process, or made them feel overloaded). **Sad** 😢 - What aspect of the activity caused the most **disappointment or discouragement** (e.g., unreached goals, lack of progress on certain objectives, feeling demotivated about group work). **Glad** 😊 - What aspect of the activity brought the most **satisfaction or gratification** (e.g., things that worked well, results achieved, particularly effective or engaging group dynamics). 4. Group the answers into macro-themes for each of the three sections, involving participants in the **clustering phase**. In this phase, teachers will act as facilitators, ensuring all participants actively engage in the discussion and inviting them to share their perspective on the responses, without necessarily having to indicate which ones are their own.
TIME	For a group of about twenty people, the activity can take **approximately one hour** (10 minutes for filling in the three sections, 15 minutes for clustering each of the three sections).
TIPS	● In order to guarantee that introverted people express their ideas and comments, also reducing possible fear of retaliation or judgement by others, this activity could be implemented with a digital tool (i.e. Mentimeter, Slido), ● If the group of participants is already very cohesive or has experienced this retrospective technique multiple times, **responses can be shared publicly instead of anonymously**, provided everyone agrees to this modality. ● The retrospective can be applied in a one-shot context, such as a workshop, or in a long-term educational context, like a school class. In the latter case, **it's useful to track the retrospectives**, comparing results with previous sessions. ● The retrospective **can be followed by a brainstorming activity**, either collective or in groups, to find solutions to the major problems identified during the clusterization. This activity is particularly useful in contexts like school classes, where the effectiveness of developed solutions can be monitored over time.

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3. Job Seeking and Empowering Girls to Compete in the Game Industry Job Market

When it comes to the game industry job market, girls and women often face barriers that limit their access to professional networks and opportunities.

These challenges can range from limited networking opportunities to gender bias and discrimination in the workplace.

This section aims to provide activities which show different categories and skills for future careers, empower girls to succeed in the industry, design strategies to overcome obstacles, build relationships and expand professional networks, and thrive in their job search and workplace environments.

Show Your Power: Build Your Digital Presence	
GOAL	To help young people develop digital literacy and confidence in presenting themselves online. The activity guides students in creating a personal digital portfolio or professional profile that showcases their skills, projects, and interests, promoting ownership of achievements and peer inspiration.
HOW	The session begins with a short discussion on Mentimeter on why self-promotion matters in creative and tech fields and what makes a strong online profile. The facilitator presents two main platform options (Canva portfolio site or LinkedIn, depending on age), plus optional alternatives (Google Sites, Wix). Students select a platform based on their goals and comfort. Working independently, they build their digital presence step by step: writing a personal bio, highlighting skills, showcasing classwork or projects (such as game ideas, art, or screenshots), adding contact links (if appropriate), and customizing with visuals. A printed checklist guides them through the process. Teachers circulate to support with writing, design choices, and technical questions. In the final part, students present their portfolio/profile in small groups or to the class (2–3 minutes each), sharing their personal story, what they included, and what they are proud of. Peers provide positive and constructive feedback, and optional fun badges (Best Design, Most Inspiring Bio, Most Original Project) can be awarded to encourage engagement. **Part 1 (30 min): Intro & Tool Selection** Kick-off Discussion Ask through a Mentimeter: ● Why is self-promotion important in creative and tech fields? ● What makes a good online profile or portfolio? Present 2 free tools to choose from: ● Canva Portfolio Website: Easy drag-and-drop website builder, no coding

	• LinkedIn: Professional network, good for older teens (16+) Students choose one platform based on their age, comfort, and goal. **Part 2 (60 min) – Build Your Brand** Each student works independently to: • Add a Personal Bio: Who you are, what you love, what you want to do • Highlight skills: e.g., storytelling, coding, art, teamwork • Showcase projects or interests (classwork, game ideas, screenshots, blog post, artwork) • Link to Socials/Contact (if appropriate) • Use images and icons to make it visually engaging Provide a **checklist template** to help them stay on track. Facilitators walk around to provide support. Portfolio / Profile Checklist: ☐ Name and short personal bio ☐ List of skills or strengths ☐ At least 1 project or interest showcased ☐ Images, screenshots, or visuals included ☐ Contact / social links (if safe and appropriate) ☐ Profile looks neat and easy to read **Part 3 (30 min) – Peer Showcase & Feedback** Each student presents their portfolio or profile in 2–3 minutes to the class or in small breakout groups: • What's your personal story? • What did you include and why? • What are you proud of? • Peers give positive, constructive feedback: "I really liked how you presented your interests…" or "You could also try adding…" Optional fun badges for recognition: • Best Design • Most Inspiring Bio • Most Original Project
TIME	120 minutes (30 min intro & tool selection, 60 min portfolio building, 30 min sharing & feedback).
TIPS	Check in advance that chosen platforms are accessible on school computers (some may require accounts or age restrictions, such as LinkedIn, which is best for 16+). For younger groups, Canva or Google Sites are recommended. Provide a simple printed checklist so students can follow along independently. Encourage them to use school-appropriate content if sharing screenshots or links.

	If time is short, focus only on writing a personal bio and showcasing one project. For introverted students, feedback can be done in pairs instead of whole-class presentations. Teachers can extend the activity by revisiting profiles later in the year, updating with new skills and projects.

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Show Your Power: Pitch Yourself!	
GOAL	To help young people strengthen their digital presence and build confidence in presenting themselves online. By reflecting on the importance of self-promotion, participants learn effective self-promotion techniques and how to pitch.
HOW	**Mentimeter - Why does self promotion matter? (15 min)** The session begins with a short discussion on why self-promotion matters, especially in the creative and tech fields. This is done through a Mentimeter. As replies are given anonymously, this will make participants participate more actively. Participants are also invited to speak up if they wish to add something. **1. Pitching a game character (25 min.)** 2.1. Individual activity (15 min.): The trainer gives as a reference a fictional environment (ex. a specific movie or videogame) from which to choose a **fictional character** to pitch. Participants give him a **name** and think about his special abilities. They write down **three special skills/powers** of this figure. 2.2. Group work (10 min.): Participants reunite into **groups** of 2-3 people and introduce themselves as the game character they have chosen, telling his name and special abilities. **2. From the virtual world, back to reality (80 min.)** 3.1. Group discussion (20 min.): Participants will now start preparing a pitch on themselves. Before doing this, they discuss all together, still in the same 2-3 people groups as before, the following questions: ● **Why is pitching yourself hard?** ● **What makes a pitch memorable?** ● **Think of a game trailer you love: what's the pitch behind it?** 3.2. Poster (20 min): Participants go back to their seats and start designing their pitch persona individually. For this, they prepare **one-slide visual**, or poster, which includes: - a **tagline**: who are you, what do you love, what you (want to) do - **3 skills/strengths** (ex. storytelling, coding, teamwork) - **one project** you are proud of. Participants are invited to use all their creativity by using colours, icons, elements, special fonts, pictures etc. 3.3. Pitch preparation (10 min.) To present their poster, participants prepare an **impactful pitch** of 30 sec. focused on themselves., including a **good hook**, **main highlights** (their best projects or main interests that distinguish

	themselves). 3.4. Practicing their pitch (10 min.) Participants practice to repeat their pitch **confidently.** 3.5. Pitching oneself to the others (5 min.) Participants meet again with their small groups and present themselves with their pitch. 3.6. Feedback (15 min.) Once everyone has pitched oneself, group members give each other feedback using the **star & wishes model**.
TIME	120 min
TIPS	As concerns the Mentimeter, it is suggested to spend enough time in clustering and debating about the answers participants give. This represents the ground on which they will then learn to pitch. Also, check in advance there is a good internet connection, a projector and that everyone has a digital tool from which to connect. Facilitators always walk around to provide support.

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Negotiation	
GOAL	Build awareness of **gender biases in negotiation** and strategies to overcome them. **Demystify salary negotiation**, helping students understand their value and develop strategies to advocate for themselves. **Empower girls in STEM** to practice and strengthen their negotiation skills in a safe, supportive environment. Strengthen **communication, persuasion, and assertiveness skills**. Foster **self-advocacy** and readiness for professional opportunities. **Support reflection** on communication styles, confidence, and gender-based challenges in the workplace. Provide a **safe, low-stakes environment** to practice real-life negotiation scenarios: by introducing generative AI as a nonjudgmental tool to simulate real-world scenarios and build confidence through dialogue and feedback.
BEFORE STARTING	**Introduce the concept of negotiation**: Clarify that negotiation is a learned skill, not a personality trait—and that women often face unique challenges (e.g. backlash, lower initial offers, social norms linked to lack of self-confidence and the imposter syndrome). **Explain how generative AI works**: • AI generates responses based on patterns from large datasets—it can simulate scenarios but not offer "truth" or legal advice. • It's best used as a conversation partner, coach, or sparring partner—not an oracle. **Teach basic prompt writing**: • Encourage clear, specific prompts (e.g., *"Act like a recruiter offering me a job. I want to negotiate a higher salary."*) • Explain that the AI can be re-prompted, corrected, or asked to give feedback.
HOW	The Activity focuses on practising negotiation for salary or career growth. AI could be used to test any kind of conversation. Teachers can use AI chat generators such as ChatGPT, or Grok, Claude, Gemini. Specifically, an AI platform was trained to act as a Human Resource Manager: https://www.yeschat.ai/gpts-9t557fYllqS-Negotiation-Simulator ***1. Introduction & Context (15-20 min)*** • *The teacher introduces the importance of negotiation, and negotiation in STEM careers. Moreover, they should focus on stereotypes and biases in negotiation and career development.* • *Share quick examples of salary gaps and negotiation failures and success stories.* • Begin with a short video on why salary negotiation matters—include gender gaps in tech salaries (i.e. Women Don't Negotiate and Other Similar Nonsense | Andrea Schneider | TEDxOshkosh)

	2. Roleplay Prompt Creation (20-30 min) Students work in pairs or solo to create a prompt for the AI chat generator, in order to simulate a negotiation. First iteration example: ● *"Pretend you're a hiring manager offering me a position in a tech company. I want to negotiate for 15% more salary."* ● *"You're a recruiter at a robotics firm. I'm a recent graduate asking about a job (or benefits, or career growth)."* ***3. Chat & Negotiate (20–30 min)*** Students interact with the AI, carrying out the negotiation in 3-4 rounds. → Encourage them to: ● Try different tones (firm vs. collaborative) ● Ask for feedback from the AI (*"How did I do?"*) ● Adjust and retry based on outcomes ***4. Debrief & Reflection (20-30 min)*** In small groups or a plenary session, students reflect: ● *What worked? What didn't?* ● *How did you feel asking for more?* ● *What would you do differently in a real negotiation?* ***5. Optional Extension*** Students use AI to *generate negotiation tips*, write a *personal negotiation checklist*, or prepare *real salary research* for their desired STEM role.
TIME	**70 - 90 minutes total** You can split it across two sessions if needed (e.g., preparation + practice on different days).
TIPS	**TIPS for Teachers (and Students)** ***Prompting Tips*** ● Start clear: *"Act like…"* or *"I want to practice…?* ● Ask for feedback: *"What could I have done better?"* ● Use follow-ups: *"Let's try again, but I want to be more assertive."* ● Be iterative: Rephrase or restart the prompt to improve results. ***Classroom Management Tips***

	• Normalize discomfort: let students know that nervousness is part of the learning process. • Create small-group or individual options for privacy. • Support emotional reactions and validate feelings: salary talk can trigger imposter syndrome. • Empower with facts: share salary ranges and real failures and success stories of women negotiating in STEM.

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Soft skills in action	
GOAL	Strengthen teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills through a playful group challenge that mirrors real-life studio collaboration. Encourage participants to experience creative constraints, manage diverse roles, and reflect on how soft skills shape project success.
HOW	**Warm-Up (5 min)** 1. Ask everyone: *"Think of your favourite game — what kind of people and skills do you think were needed to create it?"* 2. Invite a few participants to share their ideas aloud (e.g., creativity, teamwork, storytelling, patience). 3. As they answer, write the mentioned skills on a flipchart or board to create a quick **Soft Skills Wall**. 4. Summarize: *"These are exactly the kinds of skills you'll need today as your team becomes a real game studio!"* 5. Then introduce the main challenge: "Your mission is to design a brand-new game prototype in just 45 minutes — let's see those soft skills in action!" **Form Teams & Assign Roles (5 min)** 1. Divide participants into teams of 4–6, aiming for mixed genders, personalities, and skills. 2. Give out **Role Cards** (below). Teams can either: Assign roles **intentionally different** from their usual strengths (*to stretch themselves*), **or** - Decide together which combination feels most balanced for their team. - Clarify that everyone contributes ideas regardless of their role — roles are guides, not limits. **Design Sprint (45 min or longer if possible)** 1. Reveal **Theme Prompt Cards** and have each team draw one at random. 💡 *Note: Teams can use the Theme prompt Card, or they can think of their own theme; the cards are only an inspiration.* 2. Then, hand out **Diversifier Cards** (below) — a creative twist, goal, or obstacle to include. ● Teams have 45 minutes (or longer if time allows) to design a paper or digital prototype: a board game, card game, or digital concept. ● Encourage quick brainstorming, drawing, and note-making. ● Provide all materials (paper, markers, sticky notes, tape, scissors, tokens, etc.). 💡 *Note: If circumstances allow — for example, in camps or longer workshops —*

	extend the design time to 60–75 minutes to allow deeper teamwork. **Presentations (20 min)** ● Each team has 3 minutes to pitch their game. ● Each group can ask one question per team. ● *Optional extension:* Invite a **jury** (teachers, peers, or mentors) to select a winner based on **pre-announced criteria** such as creativity, teamwork, clarity, and inclusiveness. Stress that this is **optional** — the aim is collaboration and learning, not competition. ● **Reflection Circle (10 min)** Gather everyone in a circle and discuss or create a digital evaluation (e.g. Menti) 💡 *Note: Participants can feel more comfortable in providing feedback anonymously through digital tools such as Menti.* **1.** What was the hardest part of working together? **2.** Which soft skills made your team function well? **3.** Did anyone discover a new strength or role they enjoyed? **4.** Look back at the "Soft Skills Wall" from the start — which ones did you see in action?
TIME	~90-120 minutes.
MATERIALS	Printed **Role Cards** (below). Printed **Theme Prompt Cards** (below). Printed **Diversifier Cards** (below) Flipchart paper/A3 sheets. Sticky notes, markers, scissors, tape. Optional: dice, coins, game tokens. **TEMPLATES - Role Cards** 1. Role: Designer Your Mission: Focus on visuals, characters, or maps. Superpower: Creativity & Visual Thinking. 2. Role: Writer Your Mission: Create the story, characters, and dialogue. Superpower: Imagination & Words. 3. Role: Artist Your Mission: Make sketches, posters, or icons. Superpower: Drawing & Visual Design.

4.

Role: Presenter

Your Mission: Pitch your game idea to the group.

Superpower: Public Speaking & Charisma.

5.

Role: Timekeeper

Your Mission: Keep the team on schedule.

Superpower: Organization & Focus.

6.

Role: Project Manager

Your Mission: Keep the project on track by coordinating tasks, timelines, and people, ensuring everything runs smoothly from start to finish.

Superpower: Organisation & Clarity

THEME PROMPT CARDS

1. Save the Planet 🌍
2. Dream Worlds ✨
3. Future Cities 🏙️
4. Friendship & Trust 🤝
5. Mystery in Space 🚀
6. Heroes & Villains 🦸
7. Time Travel ⏳
8. Hidden Worlds 🌌

TEMPLATES – Diversifier Cards

1. **Low-Tech Challenge** – Your game must use only paper or physical materials.
2. **Inclusive Mode** – Your game must be playable by people of all ages or abilities.
3. **Silent Design** – For the first 10 minutes, no one in your group can talk. Communicate only through drawings.
4. **Plot Twist** – The ending of your game must surprise the player.
5. **Eco-Design** – Your game must include an element related to sustainability or nature.

	6. **Budget Cut** – You can only include 3 main features in your game — choose wisely. 7. **Emotional Impact** – The game must make players *feel* something strongly. 8. **Time Pressure** – You only have 35 minutes to design instead of 45. 9. **Cooperative Play** – Players must win together instead of competing. 10. **Hidden Message** – Include a secret moral or life lesson.
TIPS	Perfect for schools, summer camps, or youth clubs. Promotes **soft skills** as equally important as technical ones, preparing youth for both creative and professional teamwork. **Focus on process, not product:** The point is teamwork, not designing the next blockbuster game. Remind groups that messy sketches are totally fine. **Rotate roles:** If you repeat the activity, switch roles so that shy students try being the presenter or timekeeper at least once. **Flexible roles:** Participants can choose roles based on comfort or challenge themselves with something new. **Encourage quieter voices:** Facilitator should circulate and ask quieter participants directly for input ("What's your idea?"). **Time management:** Some teams spend too long debating ideas. Suggest a simple structure: *10 min brainstorm → 20 min develop → 15 min finalize.* **Use diversifiers wisely:** One per team is enough; they add fun, not stress. **Theme flexibility:** If teams are stuck, let them combine two Theme Prompt Cards to spark creativity. **Optional jury:** Adds motivation but should never create pressure or unhealthy competition. **If possible, extend design time** for richer collaboration and reflection. **Debrief is key:** Soft skills are invisible unless reflected on. Always close by asking what each person learned about teamwork, communication, or themselves. **Adaptation:** Can be used in youth clubs (fun & creative), schools (linked to teamwork in class projects), or camps (as a competitive but playful "mini-game jam").

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NuGamers
Leveling Up Together

Reflection on one's own learning	
GOAL	Reflecting on one's own learning from different perspectives. This helps the student to consider different points of views and realise their own growth. The reflection has best value when done at the end of a course or a project rather than after one lesson.
HOW	The time for reflection requires a quiet, calm environment. Materials needed are one **A4 sheet of paper and a pen**. Encourage the participants to find their own calm spot and e.g. have a cup of coffee and a snack. This is an individual exercise, but the reflections can be shared with others. So no discussion during the exercise about one's growth. Instruct the participants to write the question "**What am I learning on these levels/roles?**" at the top of the page. Instruct them to divide the paper into three sections: **Student, about myself, and industry professional**. - **Student:** What skills and knowledge have I learned as a student? How does this affect or help me going forward in my studies? - **About myself:** What have I discovered about myself? Are my personal goals or interests more clear now? - **Industry professionals:** What skills and knowledge have I gained as a (future) industry professional? How will these help me in my (future) career? If there is time and opportunity, the participants can share their insights in small groups or to the class. This will further help everyone to gain understanding of different points of views.
TIME	The participants should be given ample time to do the reflection, **one hour but a minimum of 30 minutes** is recommended.
TIPS	- The reflection is recommended to be done by writing by hand, not digitally. Writing things down also gives the participant the time to think and draw. - Is there something in the environment that the participants can use to reflect? E.g. posters on the wall or something you have been using as part of the teaching or student's own notes. People often imprint memories on physical objects, so encourage the participants to have a look and walk around.

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Gamebadge	
GOAL	Raise awareness among girls about the diverse career paths in the game industry, beyond programming and gameplay mechanics. Help them discover roles that align with their skills and interests (e.g., art, storytelling, sound design, marketing, UX, etc.) and inspire them to explore these opportunities.
BEFORE STARTING	The facilitator's role is to guide exploration, suggesting reflection questions and, if useful, providing a template or worksheet to structure findings. The goal is not only to learn about jobs, but also to spark the realization that there is “a place for me” in the industry, whatever a participant’s talents or interests may be.
HOW	1. **Introduction (10 min):** ○ Briefly explain the goal: *"Today, we’ll explore the many careers in game development using the Gamebadges map. You’ll discover roles you might not have known existed!"* ○ Show the Gamebadges career map on a screen. For the trainer/facilitator, you can prepare the introduction using the information included in the How To Page. Spend some time on the presentation of the map, because it has various levels and students may need help to understand its architecture. You can start with a common exploration of the website, to face immediate eventually coming from the students. 2. **Map Exploration (20 min):** ○ Divide participants into small groups (3–4 people). ○ Assign each group **2–3 career categories** from the map (e.g., Art, Audio, Design, Business, Tech). ○ Ask them to: ■ **List 3 roles** in their assigned category. ■ **Describe what each role does** (using the map’s descriptions). ■ **Brainstorm skills or interests** that match those roles (e.g., "If you love drawing, you could be a Concept Artist!"). 3. **Group Presentations (15 min):** ○ Each group presents their findings in **2–3 minutes**, highlighting: ■ The roles they explored. ■ What surprised or interested them. ■ Which role they’d like to learn more about. ■ 4. **Reflection & Discussion (15 min):** ○ Facilitate a group discussion with questions like: ■ *"Did you discover a role you didn’t know existed?"* ■ *"Which role aligns with your skills or passions?"* ■ *"What stereotypes about game dev careers were challenged today?"* ○ Encourage participants to share personal connections (e.g., *"I love writing—maybe I could be a Narrative Designer!"*).

	5. **Action Plan (10 min):** ○ Ask each participant to **write down 1–2 roles** they're curious about. ○ Provide a list of **resources** (e.g., free courses, YouTube channels, communities like Women in Games) to explore those roles further.
TIME	***Total Duration:*** *70 minutes* ● *Introduction: 10 min* ● *Map Exploration: 20 min* ● *Group Presentations: 15 min* ● *Reflection & Discussion: 15 min* ● *Action Plan: 10 min*
MATERIALS	**-** Gamebadge reflection template - Internet connection - Devices with internet connection - Projector
TIPS	● **For Large Groups:** Use a digital tool (e.g., Miro) to let groups collaborate virtually on the map. ● **For Younger Participants:** Simplify the activity by focusing on **3–4 key roles** (e.g., Artist, Writer, Sound Designer, Producer) and use visuals or videos to explain each role. ● **Adapt for Online Workshops:** Share the Gamebadges link in advance and use breakout rooms for group discussions. ● **Follow-Up:** Invite a **guest speaker** (e.g., a woman working in one of the roles) to share her experience in a future session, or use the podcasts developed in the framework of the NuGamers project. ● **Overcoming Stereotypes:** If participants say, *"I'm not good at coding,"* emphasize that **only 30% of game dev jobs require programming** - many roles rely on creativity, teamwork, or problem-solving. ● **Extra resource:** watch on YouTube the video "What jobs can you do in a Game Studio" ● **Alternative version:** you can also start the exploration from skills instead of categories. Or you can focus the attention on the same competences common to different categories. ● **Linguistic accessibility**: since the map is in English, use Google translation on your browser for participants who may struggle with language.

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Web references

What follows is a summary of all the hyperlinks present in the activities of the Toolkit.

PODCAST

NuGamers Podcast Series [Showcasing the Game Developers' roles]

VIDEO

What Kind of Jobs Are in a Game Studio? [Showcasing the Game Developers' roles and Reflection on one's own Learning]

One minute mentor by Digital Schoolhouse [Discovering Careers in the Game Industry]

Careers in Games by ScreenSkills [Discovering Careers in the Game Industry]

The hidden women of STEM - Alexis Scott | TED-Ed [Co-design a Common Agreement with the Class]

WEBSITES

About Bias:

- Bias inside us, by Smithsonian Institution
- Thinking, Fast and Slow, by Kahneman (Wikipedia)
- Bias Mega Wheel
- Bias and Fallacies clusters, by The School of Thought

https://community-canvas.org/ [Community Canvas]

https://map.gamebadges.eu/: categories and skills in game design [Career reality check (family workshop)]

Global Gamer Study – Newzoo: profiles of gamers (motivations, habits, attitudes) [Career reality check (family workshop)]

https://www.yeschat.ai/gpts-9t557fYllqS-Negotiation-Simulator [Negotiation]

Newzoo – Global Games Market: leading source on market size, revenues, gamer numbers [Career reality check (family workshop)]

Women in Games: a community to be connected with professionals [Showcasing the Game Developers' roles]

Women Don't Negotiate and Other Similar Nonsense | Andrea Schneider | TEDxOshkosh: video on why salary negotiation matters—include gender gaps in tech salaries [Negotiation]

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