

Sustainability NEXUS – A Catalyst for a Sustainable Game Industry

Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



Co-funded by
the European Union



RESILIENT ECONOMIES AND COMMUNITIES

BSG-Go

Project Information

“BSG Go! Scaling-up Baltic Sea Game Support”
Interreg BSR Project # C002

BSG GO! explores and pilots promising solutions to shape a resilient support environment for the young and growing game developer studios and as a result minimise the threat they face in times of crisis.

<https://interreg-baltic.eu/projects/bsg-go>

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Context

With the increasing onset of global crises, a growing sense of urgency is evident across political agendas, civil society initiatives, national and European regulations, and large-scale movements such as Fridays for Future. This urgency is further reinforced by substantial financial support for the development and implementation of impactful solutions. While the call for action stems from both top-down and bottom-up demands, collective awareness must now be matched by clear prioritization and a deeper understanding of practical, actionable measures within society and industry.

Significant efforts have been made to help companies comply with new regulations, such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), through various guidelines, studies, and tools designed to measure and reduce carbon footprints. For many businesses, minimizing their environmental impact remains the most tangible and immediate way to contribute to sustainability.

However, achieving social fairness and inclusion presents more complex challenges. While the principles of diversity and equal opportunity may seem straightforward, implementing them effectively requires addressing deep-rooted barriers. This includes rethinking job postings to attract a broader range of candidates, creating pathways for underrepresented groups to advance into leadership roles, and fostering career mobility in sectors where these groups remain underrepresented.

For the games industry, however, the potential scope of contribution is a lot larger and the opportunities for sustainable game creation are manifold and go way beyond reducing a studio's carbon footprint. Within the industry, there is a steadily growing effort to discover and develop methods to contribute to environmental sustainability and social fairness. But as with the political volition and societal action, there still remains a big gap. Increasing regulatory pressure, such as reporting requirements and penalties for non-compliance, will inevitably push companies to adapt, shaping future business strategies and models. Even smaller studios will soon need to address their role in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Given the industry's vast potential to drive meaningful change, it is crucial to engage all stakeholders and foster a collective commitment to sustainability—ensuring that game developers, publishers, and industry leaders recognize and embrace their role in shaping a more sustainable future.

With this forward-looking perspective toward the next generation of the game business, the Sustainability Nexus strategy aims to bridge the gap between the individual sustainable game expert groups and the whole game industry, to foster a sense of societal responsibility within the industry, encouraging contributions to the SDGs that go beyond mere legal compliance and fully leverage the industry's potential for positive impact. The objective is, thus, to connect and amplify the work of sustainability advocates in the gaming sector, particularly in Europe, by increasing visibility for their insights, initiatives, and innovations. At the same time, the endeavour is to reach out to game developers to encourage and inspire them to engrain sustainable responsibility into their daily work. to connect and amplify the work of sustainability advocates in the gaming sector, particularly in Europe, by increasing visibility for their insights, initiatives, and innovations. Driven by the goal of promoting a resilient game industry, the starting and growing companies are the most vulnerable in many respects. In the perspective taken here, it is about preparing these groups for meeting demands of future and sustainable business expectations and requirements. With their limited resources – money and time – they tend to consider sustainability issues to be something “nice-to-do” rather than “must do” priority.

Towards a European Community of Practice

Game developers in Europe seeking to learn more about sustainable actions, projects, initiatives and tools within their industry, would soon discover that:

- most big initiatives are steered by US organisations and on US time zone;
- of the several European initiatives, it remains unclear which are still active;
- more and more projects, tools, guidelines and studies are popping up, yet making it difficult to understand where to start, and whether/how they are connected or just happening in popcorn-style, doubling efforts;
- although there seems to be a lot of ways to do sustainable games, it seems that most guidelines focus on “storytelling” and carbon footprint reduction “in the studio” (as opposed to “on the user-side” or “in the cloud”);
- “sustainability” is mainly understood as “environmental sustainability”. There are a lot more initiatives addressing this focus than with “social fairness” sustainability concerns;
- a lot of talks and reading material but little “hands-on” competence building outside the “green game jams” (mostly organised by US stakeholders), which is geared towards “green storytelling” games.

In 2023, BSG Go! and Spielfabrique¹ joined forces in reaching out to the community of game developers, in particular the young talents, emerging studios, and Indie studios. Spielfabrique, in line with their remit as accelerator, envisaged targeting specifically Indie studios, and BSG Go! in line with their mission to foster a resilient game business support ecosystem, sought to get hubs and mentors interested.

Eventually, both had to recognise that their first attempts attracted those already interested in promoting sustainability in the game industry. On the positive side, we soon came to understand that these interested persons are best placed to form the “bridge” to our desired target groups, as they have their own networks and communities in which they carry some weight and are actively promoting sustainable goals.

The real success – apart from the surprisingly large number of attendees (over 100) – was in bringing together different experts from across Europe and different initiatives who were aware of each other but some of which had never met, and in the satellite events as described in more detail below.

Picture on the right:

The panellists at the Sustainability Nexus 2024 from right to left: Gabriella Kalteneckar (moderator), Jenny Brusk, Volha Kapitonava, Hugo Bille, Linn-Marie Edlund, and Patrick Prax.



¹ <https://spielfabrique.eu/>

From a Project-driven to a Community-driven Approach

As vital and imperative as projects, studies, research, initiatives etc doubtlessly are, for a real and imminent impact, all their efforts will be falling short if the majority of the industry does not take up solutions, change their ways, follow recommendations, in short: start taking action.

Alas, we have seen the emergence of several “carbon-calculators” for game studios alone in Europe, and who knows how many have been developed globally, which begs the question of “doesn’t one do the trick?” or “aren’t we wasting time developing similar solutions?”. The need is understood, but communication and networking in Europe to avoid redundancy of efforts and better streamline development of solutions is still a major issue,² despite the large established global networks such as Playing for the Planet or the IGDA SIG Climate initiative and their dedicated open discord platform.

If European projects already have difficulties to connect, how much more challenging is it to reach out to their target groups? We, therefore, explored in 2023 and 2024 how we can combine networking and providing a common platform and enhanced visibility for sustainability in games projects and experts with onboarding local and regional game developer communities.

The general layout of the programme

The programme we designed for the two annual events reflects the approach to inspire and stimulate game developers to act, create and think sustainably and at the same time start transferring a sense of “ownership” of implementing the solutions in their work.

1. Knowledge transfer & inspiration – input from experts, passive audience
2. Encouragement & stimulation – hands-on or interactive participation by the attendees

In an effort to be sustainable and reach a wide scope of people while creating an interesting and lively atmosphere, we explored hybrid solutions:

A “Nexus” location for a “live” (in-person) panel streamed for an online audience and where appropriate or necessary, complemented with online presentations.

Several “satellite” locations that jointly watched the stream and then moved on to a local workshop, organised by local hubs or universities. This was complemented with online break-out sessions to accommodate online viewers not joining the in-person satellite events.

This way we combined the “conference” formats of keynotes and panel usually implying a passive audience with the workshop format aiming for active participation by attendees. We reduced the carbon footprint of the usual conference format which lives off the physical presence of the audience and thus involves travelling with a live atmosphere requiring only the panellists to travel, and the “active participation” at local or regional venues reduced again travelling and avoided flight travels in particular.

The caveat is that hybrid equipment and streaming services are required, meaning extra costs and expertise, and use of servers adding to the carbon footprint.

² The Horizon Europe project „Strategies“, investigating sustainable game creation, is currently collating a list of all tools, publications, projects etc. regarding sustainability for/in the game industry and affiliated sectors. The project has recently started, so it is unclear when their findings will be published.
<https://www.strategieshorizon.eu/>

Successful kick-off events for a Sustainability Nexus

1st Edition in 2023

Sustainability Nexus Conference
FOR SUSTAINABLE INDIE AND GAME DEVELOPER ECOSYSTEM

Let's work together towards a better game industry for all!
Explore, discuss, and celebrate ongoing efforts towards sustainability in the game industry with change-makers

Cologne • 15 November 2023 • 10:00 - 16:00 CET
KölnBusiness - Börsenplatz 1, 50667 Cologne (Open Space)

Keynotes **Workshops** **Panels**

Good lunch included but seats are limited!

#GameChangers
#ImpactTogether
#SustainabilityNexus23

KölnBusiness devcom BGZ
DATASPELBRANSCHEN DEHIVE Game Habitat Stockholm

The first edition of the Sustainability Nexus took place on 15 November 2023 from 10h-16h CET with Cologne Business as its “Nexus” studio.

The programme design was structured like this:

- Part 1: 4 Keynotes – inspiring reflections on environmental sustainability in the games industry and opportunities for action, including a new tool for monitoring one’s carbon footprint
- Part 2: Panel discussion among the presenting experts
- Part 3: Local and online interactive workshops / discussions = onboarding game developers, mentors, community stakeholders

There were **four keynote presentations** followed by a **live panel** with the presenting experts.³ As the Cologne venue was also organised like a “satellite”, i.e. combined with a regional physical event in the afternoon, there was also a live audience for the panel. One of the invited panellists could not attend live as planned due to a Covid infection and presented his keynote online and joined the panel via screen.

Following the method of distributed sports events like a European Football Cup, we tried to provide even more “live” atmosphere by **greeting the satellite groups** (with their audience in the background) “Hello from XX” one by one before heading off to the keynotes.

³ For more information on the speakers and their keynotes, see both the recording of the session <https://youtu.be/lg7YD1KHF2g?si=pGesqrKvcb8VBsSY> and the short summary in the Appendix of this document

Then followed a two-hour **lunchbreak** (12h-14h) for the online viewers, while the live workshops had some flexibility to start earlier, or as in the case of Cologne have a mingle of audience and experts during a lunch.

The satellite venues were:





Stockholm – Sweden Game Summit where the morning was streamed live on big screens in large open spaces and a workshop with approx. 20 attendees took place in a separate room in the afternoon.

Berlin – University of Applied Sciences (HTW Berlin) and their game design institute DE:HIVE conducted a hands-on workshop with approx. 100 students working in groups for 3 hours in the afternoon.

Malmö – Game Habitat and Dev Hub discussed with two teams, policy issues around sustainability of games.

Cologne – Spielfabrique and Business Cologne organised a workshop and Q&A with the experts and audience

In parallel, we had offered **online break-out sessions** for online attendees with highly renowned and active experts in the field.

<p>2:00-2:10 Introduction to the Session</p>  <p>Shayne Hayes Co-Chair, IGDA Climate SIG</p>		
 <p>Clayton Whittle Co-Chair, IGDA Climate SIG</p> <p>2:10-2:15 Design Patterns 2:15-2:30 Breakout Discussions</p>	 <p>Arnaud Fayolle Co-Chair, IGDA Climate SIG</p> <p>2:35-2:40 Climate Councils 2:40-2:55 Breakout Discussions</p>	 <p>Dr. Ben Abraham Founder, AfterClimate</p> <p>3:00-3:15 Industry Benchm 3:15-3:25 Breakout Discuss</p>

<https://youtu.be/4fK-HeGscaU?si=FwjfDHQ8ssp27WzY>

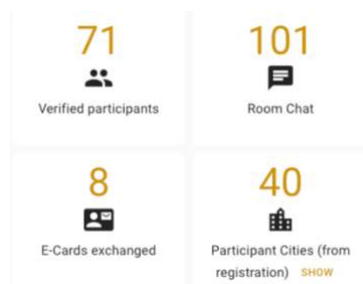
At 15h30, all came back to the Nexus live stream and one by one the **satellites reported back** on their afternoon sessions.

Analytics

The event and in particular the fabulous and highly inspiring presentations were well received.

We had 71 online participants plus the offline viewing audience watching the live stream at the Sweden Game Summit in the morning (not countable), approx. 100 Students in Berlin and 15 persons in Malmö and 30 persons in Cologne

Viewers joined from Sevilla to Uppsala, Torino to Oldenburg, across all of Europe, but also from Shanghai, New Delhi, Detroit, Calgary and San Juan.



Some Insights from the Nexus 2023:

We were very lucky and grateful to have had such illustrious experts supporting us and offering their expertise and time without receiving remuneration (except one keynote speaker).

We naturally covered the travel costs. However, travel and accommodation arrangement turned out to be above expected costs and required massive organisation as the chosen date was unfortunate: it coincided with ARTS Cologne, which is a very renowned international fair. Cologne being a small town with a small airport was not only booked out, but the hotel prices tripled, and the few direct flights were also fully booked. Some speakers thus had to use up to three flights or two flights plus train plus an extra night to arrive and stay the one day in Cologne. Unless one has a good sponsor, which in this case was split between the Business Cologne for the costs generated by Spielfabrique, and the project BSG Go! for their events and tasks, these costs and the carbon footprint produced needs to be both reduced.

For online viewers, a 2-hour break was too long, and we lost most of them, which was a real pity seeing what great speakers we had from across the ocean!

The concept for the online break-out sessions would need some rethinking to make them more meaningful in terms of reach-out to developers and creating a community.

2nd Edition 2024

The second edition of the Sustainability Nexus took place on 12 November 2024 from 10h-16h CET with Stockholm Business Region as its “Nexus” studio.

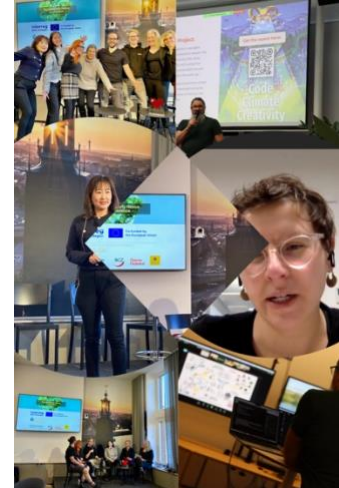
The important change was including the wider concept of sustainability. Although everyone refers to the 17 SDGs, most ideas on “sustainability” – at least in the Global North – are immediately understood as “environmental sustainability”. Social fairness (inclusion, diversity, gender equity, health, etc.) are seldom a topic in a “sustainability”-termed study, talk, project. It seems as if people find it difficult to see the connection, and thus to grasp an understanding of “sustainability” as interrelating the aspects of environment, health, social, and economic sustainability as mutual dependent.

Therefore, we tried to invite experts who would cover more sustainability aspects than just the environment.

The method of **live greeting the satellite groups** “Hello from XX” one by one before heading off to the introductory keynote was taken over from the 1st edition. The satellites also presented their topics for the afternoon and where the option was offered (as in the case of Game Habitat in Malmö) also invited people to join them online for a hybrid workshop.

This time, we divided the streamed morning session in two parts:

1 keynote and 4 presentations on solutions covering social, environmental and economic sustainability.⁴ Apart from the keynote speaker who invited us to follow him with his understanding of an holistic sustainability, the presentations were all online via Zoom, streamed live, on practical tools for monitoring and reporting one’s carbon footprint, an in-depth study on gender equality in the industry and .an introduction into economic sustainability, a focus gaining more momentum since Mario Draghi’s report on Europe’s sustainable competitiveness⁵ in September 2024 and the ensuing political guidelines “Europe’s Choice” from Ursula von der Leyen and the focus on sustainable prosperity.⁶



In the Stockholm nexus studio, the live audience were the panellists⁷ asking questions to the presenters, the organisers and the streaming/recording technician.

Then followed a **lively panel discussion among the present experts** taking both the broader spectrum of sustainability, presenting their views and ideas based on their experience as practitioners and researchers of sustainable strategies and solutions for the game industry.

With the aim of instigating not only a community of interest (designating the many experts advocating “the cause” and researching solutions) but also a community of practice (the game developers and studios effectively implementing solutions), we reviewed the 1st edition’s programme concept accordingly:

Part 1: Live Keynote on the holistic nature of sustainability

Part 2: Online Presentations of projects = awareness / access to solutions for environmental, social and economic sustainability – practical strategies, methods, tools and understanding of the issue

Part 3: Live panel discussion among experts = inspiration for action

Part 4: Local interactive workshops = onboarding game developers, mentors, community stakeholders

The morning session was **recorded**: https://youtu.be/Yp6bl76yl_g?si=jZHbAqx_ZmFMwSb3

Then followed a one-hour **lunchbreak** (13h-14h) – a lesson learned from the 2023 edition. However, we did not have any offers from experts for online break-out sessions (see also chapter “Recommendation and Outlook” at the end of this document).

⁴ For more details on the presentations, see the Appendix of this documents

⁵ <https://shorturl.at/wUDUM> and <https://shorturl.at/dzFiD>

⁶ <https://shorturl.at/P9S4K>

⁷ See the Appendix of this document for more information

The satellite venues were:

Game Habitat Malmö:

Having presented the Susindi tool (carbon footprint calculator)“Play, create, calculate”⁸ in the morning session via Zoom, the afternoon session provided a hands-on workshop on how to use the tool with the developers of the tool U&WE present to guide the attending 5 game developers (no one joined online).



Cologne Business:

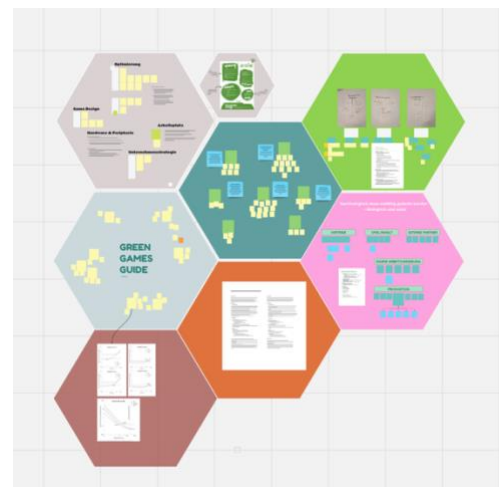
Spielfabrique, a partner in the “Strategies” project⁹ had invited stakeholders from across the ecosystem, game developers, researchers, politicians etc. Their “Policy workshop” comprised this mix with 30 participants. In a 90 minute workshop, they explored biases towards possible futures in

games, potential scenarios for the development of the games industry towards sustainable futures, and mapped drivers for change. On site they captured the discussion with a graphic recording



HTW Berlin:

The game design institute DE:HIVE (incubator and MA study programme) organised a „Green Game Design Workshop“ aimed at creating a set of guidelines that would focus on what studios can contribute to sustainability aside from reducing production costs, thereby focusing on small independent studios, not triple A productions. While approaches around game design were discussed as well, a wide variety of ideas emerged during the discussion and the groups themselves have summarised their ideas on a Miro board. Of the 40 invited students, round 30 participated.

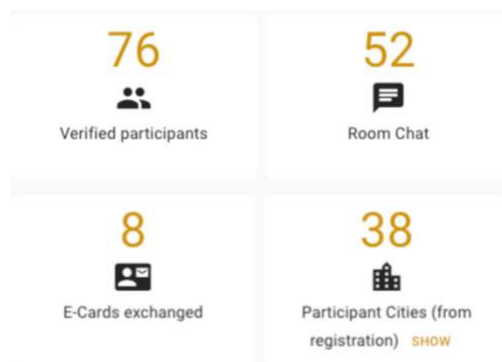


⁸ Find guidelines and calculator here: <https://dataspelsbranschen.se/playcreatecalculate>

⁹ Strategies also published a report on the afternoon session: <https://shorturl.at/jh1ko>

Analytics

The number of viewers online 76 and combined with the onsite viewers at the satellite venues, there were around 140+ viewers from across the globe.



Some Insights from the Nexus 2024:

Again, we were very lucky and grateful to have had such illustrious experts supporting us, offering their expertise and time without receiving remuneration (except moderator). Also, big projects such as “Strategies” and “Susindi” or the initiative “Sustainable Games Association” having started and gained visibility in the time between the two editions increased the interest by experts within Europe to join the Nexus.

The approach to include “social and economic” sustainability was much appreciated, although there is room for expanding those topics further (as they have also not yet gained traction in form of initiatives and projects, beyond the renowned networks “WEinGames” and “Women in Games”¹⁰).

We again covered the travel costs for the panellist. However, this time with Stockholm as venue location and a better-connected airport, and using a collateral event to our advantage, namely a games event in which the invited experts were interested, and adding to it another BSG Go! workshop, made the travelling worthwhile and balanced between the footprint created and the added value by attending all three events. Sweden being the home to a very active and mature game industry had the advantage that two of the 4 Swedish panellists could take a train to Stockholm.

The 2023 edition had commissioned two companies: one for filming the live event in Cologne, another for streaming the event and organising/moderating the streaming platform. In 2024, we managed to have both activities done in one stroke, thus saving on costs but also avoiding redundancy and disruption at the interface between two companies’ tasks.

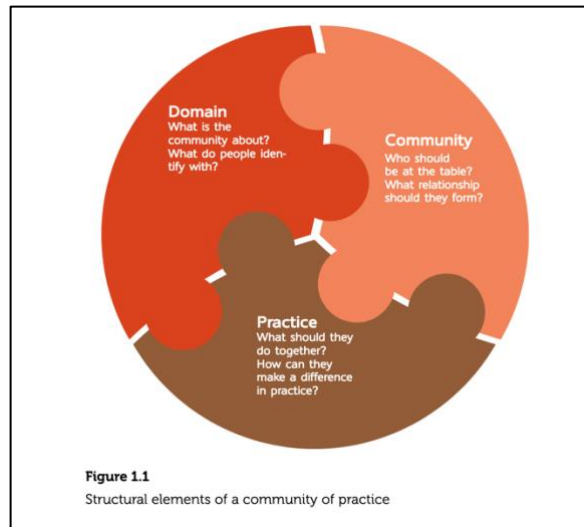
We reduced the lunch break to one hour, however, not having any online breakout sessions, there was no issue with “retaining” online viewers. As online sessions for interactive engagement are still part of the concept, the best way to implement them still needs to be addressed and possibly has much to do with the lack of understanding the concept and preparedness for hands-on interactive sessions. Currently, presenting solutions to a large audience seems to be the favoured practice next to the many jams organised on a global scale.

¹⁰ <https://weingames.fi/> and <https://www.womeningames.org/>

Recommendations and Outlook

Facilitating a Community of Practice

A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern, set of problems, or passion about a topic and a desire to leverage individual and collective talents to deepen their applied knowledge in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.¹¹



Referring to the model presented by Wenger-Trayner et al, we could assess the progress of our first endeavours with respect to these three elements which might point the way of how to continue building or facilitating a community of practice:

Domain:

This seemed “straightforward” enough until it wasn’t. Although some were aware of the holistic meaning of “sustainability”, the fact that the whole programme only focused on the environmental aspect of sustainability went totally unchallenged in the 2023 decision. Initiatives that say that they address the holistic sustainability, concede that they “need to start somewhere and the environmental damage is the most urgent issue to tackle”, leaving the impression that “you can’t deal with them all in one go” and thus that they are separate, and the holistic sustainability a theoretical concept rather than a multifaceted interdependent intrinsic mechanism forming societal reality.

Even when introducing the aspects of gender and economy/welfare into the second edition of the Sustainability Nexus, the feeling of “separate” topics and interest areas remain. Hand on heart, not all those interested in saving the environment are equally motivated to actively engage in equity, diversity and inclusion or economic sustainability, and vice versa. Hence, the candid question is: can there really be a functioning community of practice (CoP) around the holistic perspective of sustainability? Do we find ourselves with one domain around which we can grow a community of practice? Because the shared strong (!) interest is what bring people together. Perhaps the Nexus conference could be an umbrella event for the three aspects (domains) and three CoPs? This will require a strong moderation of the conference to bring together experts that share this understanding of the equal importance of all three “domains”. A decision that needs to be made and be clear among the stewards of the CoP(s).

¹¹ Quote and graphic from: Communities of practice within and across organizations a guidebook. Etienne Wenger-Trayner, Beverly Wenger-Trayner, Phil Reid, Claude Bruderlein. 2nd edition 2023. Social Learning Lab: <https://www.wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/24-02-21-CoP-guidebook-second-edition-final-2.pdf>

Community

If a community is a social relationship amongst people with a shared interest and a CoP in addition to this, is a community prepared to learn from each other and together for the same cause on the basis of a shared pool or scope of practices (often in their professional life). Social learning is an intrinsic driver of CoPs. One cannot dictate the emergence of a CoP. It can only be driven by a group of persons with similar experiences and the same interest. One can only foster the environment for a CoP to evolve. With the Sustainability Nexus, the first CoP we addressed is that of the experts already working on projects, problem analyses, strategies and tools etc. Getting them to form a CoP was and still is the first step in progress. At the same time, we used these experts as a means for attracting people who share the interest, but are not actively involved in promoting, researching or developing solutions for sustainability goals. This provided a knowledge transfer between experts (knowledge providers) and interested practitioners (knowledge receivers), in our case game developers. The next step is to foster CoPs that want to contribute to the “domain” by learning together and from each other on the basis of the received knowledge (both as inspiration and solid input for practical action) and their own experience as humans and game developers. This second part is for sure the more difficult part which requires a sound strategy and a medium-term effort. With the Nexus, our strategy in this respect, which we believe is one that is promising and should be kept up, was reflected in the satellite workshops. On the long run, CoPs would be self-organised groups with meetups, workshops, jams etc. on a regular basis over the year in between the annual “umbrella” event. Being in touch with different hubs across Europe¹², some of which have already participated as satellites, is the most promising avenue for a continuation of this strategy of them instigating local and regional CoPs. But the endeavour is to have online CoPs to reach out to remote areas, individual persons, and benefit also from transnational experiences.

Practice

In contrast to a community of interest: ...

...“Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short, a shared practice.”¹³

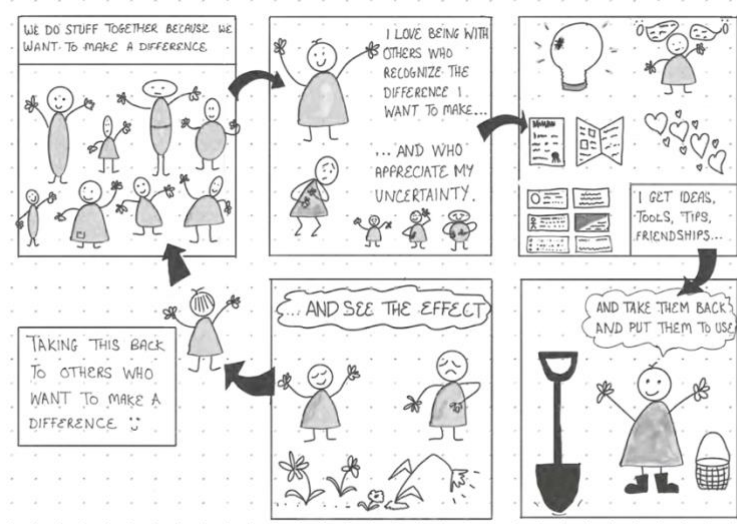


Figure 1.2

A community of practice as an ongoing learning loop

¹² The League of European Game Developer Hubs – a loose network of hubs, see: <https://gamedevhubs.eu/>

¹³ Ditto.

In all honesty, the first stage that the Sustainability Nexus has reached is that of a community of interest, and not yet a CoP in the strict sense of the meaning as outlined above. But by bringing experts to the same table and creating the space where they become personally acquainted and remain in touch beyond the annual conference, the first CoP is emerging. The key logic of CoPs is to develop this “shared repertoire” via exchange which provides a “learning curve” not through a designed content collaboration (e.g. the workshop goal) but through the built relationships (thus it can be casual exchanges) and trust. It is the social exchange that ultimately adds the ideas, practices, methods of others to be adopted into your own repertoire, so that gradually all members tap into the same repertoire and with this effect the change they sought when coming together.

To quote C. Angheloiu:

Primary focus on relationships and trust building rather than on ‘knowledge transfer’.
*Obviously content knowledge is key and there needs to be enough ‘meat on the bones’ for people to have a shared language and understanding of the domain they’re situated within.[...] You can map a system all you like, but the map alone won’t tell you what to do next.*¹⁴

Picking up the baton

Though the KPIs for a long-term success are based on the depth and density of the relationships established through the initiation of the Sustainability Nexus, following C. Angheloiu’s¹⁵ KPIs which are the

- number of collaborations having emerged,
- number of self-organised sub-groups or smaller communities having evolved,
- type of support needed to self-facilitate

What the continuation of the annual event as facilitator of a CoP or several CoPs should bear in mind and focus on is the third KPI, i.e. the strategic support that CoPs need to self-organise and self-facilitate.

The Nexus as an annual event providing new stimulate for the CoPs and their activities throughout the year, slowly developing a platform where the CoPs can attract new members, exchange practices amongst each other to enrich their repertoire, to remain connected to the Nexus groups and the holistic sustainability goal.

To ensure the evolution of the first CoP (the expert groups), two recommendations seem pivotal:

- create a **Memorandum of Understanding** among European players actively involved in research and solution development, in promotion and analysis of the objectives and challenges.
- keep up the in-person encounters (**live panels**) and enhance them with a social event (lunch/dinner)

¹⁴ Corina Angheloiu: Facilitating communities of practice: from individual to ecosystem learning outcomes. Aug 20, 2020: <https://medium.com/urban-resilience-dialogues/facilitating-communities-of-practice-from-individual-to-ecosystem-learning-outcomes-bf7b54660b08>

¹⁵ Corina Angheloiu: Facilitating communities of practice: from individual to ecosystem learning outcomes. Aug 20, 2020: <https://medium.com/urban-resilience-dialogues/facilitating-communities-of-practice-from-individual-to-ecosystem-learning-outcomes-bf7b54660b08>

The latter point involves costs (see also the Appendix of the document) which could be avoided if the panel were to take place in the framework of another conference which a pool of experts are likely to attend. However, it does also risk of deflecting attention from people who would normally participate out of interest for that “domain” but are at the conference for another more salient purpose (e.g. meeting investors/publishers, presenting/showcasing their game etc.). The competition for attention is very high and counterproductive for fostering CoPs. But it is worth a try which currently is in planning.

We have been thinking about fixing a recurring “**Sustainable Games Day**”, e.g. every year on the Friday of Week 46. This day could either be designed with a conference morning and workshop session in the afternoon – possibly a good practice for the first few years – but it can also develop into a day full of activities across Europe.

For the “umbrella” events like the annual conference, a hybrid setting is highly recommendable. If done during a game conference, the likelihood is great that there is a streaming service or the equipment and technician already in place. To reduce costs, the actual streaming could be reduced to the morning session (thus omitting the “live” summaries of the workshop and “goodbyes to the satellites”), and have break-out sessions over other available and cheaper or free conference platform options (Zoom, Google, Discord, Slack, Teams etc.).

It also needs to be tested if having a panel as part of another conference provides not only the opportunity to reduce travel costs for invited experts, but if it would be interesting for attendees of the conference to join an interactive session during the conference and for non-attendees to at least get an impression of the conference atmosphere through a live stream and feel connected to the conference audience, which on the other hand would add to the internationality and visibility of a conference.

To stimulate CoPs amongst game developers, mentors and studio leads, the idea of practice-oriented **interactive online break-out sessions and regional workshops** for sure needs be improved. To ensure continuity, the suggested step is to try and get in touch with local “activists” (connection to be made through the network of experts already aware of the Nexus and through the hubs). These local players are either teams that make “green games” or have developed “green solutions” for making games or are advocates for green game creation (e.g. lecturers, teachers, coaches) or others known through their appearance (e.g. as keynote speakers) at regional events.

Ultimately, facilitating CoPs means stimulating individuals to meet on a trustful basis. Being “peers” and sharing the same interest and professional field is the pre-requisite. What the Sustainability Nexus event or Day – and in particular the break-out session/satellite workshops - can offer is the “foundational experience” where people can meet and discuss and make first connections.

It is for sure hard to sustain active engagement without a lead, a “CoP steward” driving and organising meetings, events etc., even more so across different geographies and time zones. But the steward needs from the start to work towards being replaced by others in the group:

You can tell a community of practice is working when relationships and peer-to-peer support are so strong that you can step back and learn. [...] knowing that the goal is to eventually remove yourself from the equation. It's best to foster peer-to-peer connections early so that groups build relationships with each other and can rely on those relationships once a coach is no longer involved.¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://www.preventioninstitute.org/making-connections/facilitating-community-practice>

APPENDIX

1st Edition Keynote Speakers

Games for Systemic Sustainability - From Dead Ends to Real Possibilities

Patrick Prax

This keynote is an inspirational talk on barriers to sustainability for games and the intersectionality of issues related to sustainability. A motivational call for action and expression of desires for what results this conference should yield, presented by Patrick Prax associate professor in Game Design at Uppsala University.

On the Materiality of Digitality. What are Video Games made of and why should care?

Prof. Dr. Sonia Fizek

Sonia Fizek is a games and media scholar. She holds a professorship in Media and Game Studies at the Cologne Game Lab at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences. Fizek is also a visiting professor at the University of Lower Silesia in Wroclaw (Poland) and a co-editor-in-chief of the international Journal of Gaming and Virtual Worlds. In her latest book *Playing at a Distance* (MIT Press 2022), she explores the borderlands of video game aesthetic with focus on automation, AI and posthuman forms of play. Fizek's current research concentrates on the environmental sustainability of video games. She is a principal investigator of "Greening Games" (www.greeningames.eu), an international project on the sustainability of video games (2021-2024, funded by the German Academic Exchange Service EU/DAAD).

How great climate games are made

Trevin York

Trevin York is a transformational game designer, and the founder and director of Dire Lark, an Edinburgh-based game design for change studio and consultancy. He has spent the past decade leading game projects focused on effecting lasting change within complex contexts, working with massive international institutions, local non-profits, and tech startups alike. Trevin has a degree in Design for Change (MA) from the University of Edinburgh, and his latest work builds on these studies, focusing on the research and design of pro-environmental impact games and interventions. Trevin is a co-author of the IGDA Climate SIG's Environmental Game Design Playbook, a first-of-its-kind research paper that explicitly connects environmental psychology to best practices in game design, written to be accessible and actionable for game developers.

JYROS, a carbon footprint calculator for game dev

Geoffrey Marmonier

Currently CSR project manager for the French National Gaming Industry Consortium, Geoffrey has been leading since the beginning of the year the JYROS project. JYROS is a tool designed to calculate the environmental impact of video games companies. Prior to working on this project and the CSR world, Geoffrey has worked for 15 years in the UK as an R&D engineer in TechnipFMC, a subcontractor for the oil and gas industry.

2nd Edition Keynote Speakers and Panellists

Keynote and panellist: Patrick Prax

Researcher and Assistant Professor from **Uppsala University** opened with an inspiring keynote, "The Map to Systemic Sustainability... and How to Fight a Dragon!", setting an engaging tone for the day.

Presentations by

Maria Wagner

Co-Founder of the **Sustainable Game Association** shared vital updates on sustainability trends and upcoming regulations shaping the gaming industry.

Anaa Larsson and Amanda Möttönen (U&We) and Jesper Krogh Kristiansen (Game Habitat)

Unveiling their toolbox for calculating and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Play, Create, Calculate), a key deliverable from the Vinnova-funded "Sustainability in New Digital Industries (Susindi)" project.

Emil Lundedal Hammar

Postdoctoral Researcher, Media & Game Studies at the **Royal Danish Academy** presented fascinating findings from the FAIR GAME project, offering an in-depth look at gender diversity in game production.

Matthes Lindner

Project manager with Spielfabrique, he provided us with a thought-provoking session on building economic resilience in indie studios, highlighting innovation as a critical tool for navigating crises.

Our morning session ended on a high note with an engaging Expert Panel Discussion.

Panel discussion with

Gabriella Kalteneckar (moderator and panellist)

Senior Project Manager | Program manager RISE Game Node

Linn-Marie Edlund

Producer with River End Games | Women in Games Ambassador

Jenny Brusk

Innovation Manager & Business Coach at Science Park Skövde

Volha Kapitonava

Games producer and mentor

Hugo Bille

Game designer and co-chair IGDA Climate SIG

Rationale:

Status Quo (US movement)

Discord

„Popcorn field Europe“

Elementary building block of future business (development, models and practices).

From a project-driven to a community-driven model:

Sustainable Format

Lean canvas model to show how and why?

Monetary considerations and financing recommendations

Organisational considerations

Technical specification for streaming and recording

This is just an example, for how we briefed the companies we asked to provide a quote for a bid-of-three. As mentioned above, we did commission two separate services for the **1st edition** to ensure the “live” atmosphere quality:

Live streaming provider

We are looking for a service provider who can help us film and stream a one-day hybrid conference on-site in XXX, to an international audience on a dedicated platform (the platform is contracted separately). The platform is not part of this proposal and will be contracted separately. We are asking for the following services:

- Provision of a 3-camera video set-up, and a 7-microphones (5 neckworm, 2 hand-held) audio set-up, including workstations and hardware to mix images, sounds and to live stream.
- Media Operator(s) and technical assistant(s) to set up, run, and wrap up a live streaming production:
 - The team records, mixes, and live-streams a series of talks as well as one panel discussion that will be happening on-site in Cologne.
 - The final mixed sound and video is to be streamed onto a dedicated third-party platform.
 - At two stages in the program (beginning and end), speakers will tune in digitally. The production team is to provide a solution for these speakers to be able to be seen and heard both on-site in Cologne and in the live stream.
 - At multiple points in the program, external polling/collaboration tools, like Mentimeter or Miro are to be shown to the audience.

Platform provider:

For a one-day hybrid conference, we are looking for a conference platform that includes the following features

- Easy-to-navigate UI and a max. 3-clicks sign-up process.

- Live stream with unlimited audience size. Sound and Video for the live stream will be provided by a team who records the conference on-site in XXX
 - Chat functionality for viewers of the live stream
 - Breakout room with unlimited participant size. Breakout rooms should allow for all participants to share their video and speak. Moderators of the breakout room should be able to share their screen, mute and kick participants, and moderate chat.

In addition, we are requiring the following services:

- Set-up and design of the platform using the conference's images, logos, and (as much as possible) CI.
- Technical assistance during the day of the conference.
- Content moderation during the day of the conference.
- Provision of audience and engagement statistics. Full recordings of both the live stream and the breakout room activities.

For the **2nd edition**, we opted to have both in one hand. The specs were slightly different:

Setup & customisation of the platform (6 hours of adaption, 3 correction rounds)

3 break-out rooms for the afternoon.

Presenters' introduction to live broadcast system

Zoom technician remotely.

Technician on site for Includes handling of projector, cameras & microphones on site.

Live support during the event

Own URL, customised registration (including emails to participants)

Recording kept for 30 days (download / sent to organisers).

Cost examples

Item	1 st edition 2023	2 nd edition
Live film recording	4,000 €	n/a (incl in streaming)
Streaming platform	2,500 €	5,000 €
Travels + Accommodation	2,000 € for 3 experts (plus flight for 4 th)	2,500 € for 6 experts (only 5 hotel)
Entertainment expenses	800 € (for 5 persons)	1,000 € (for 7 persons)
Keynote / moderator remuneration	500 € (1 person)	1000 € (1 person)
Total Cash Flow	Approx. 10,000 Euro	Approx. 10,000 Euro
Approx. Hours preparation time	Approx 150 hours	Approx. 120 hours

Dissemination

IGDA SIG Climate kindly supported us on their Discord and even gave us a dedicated channel!

We used Eventbrite for disseminating the invite (using the link on all other channels such as LinkedIn, newsletter from BSG Go!, mailing list from Spielfabrique, Game Habitat and Website announcements, also advertising it on the League Discord and the Women in Games Discord).