

Student Project Fund

Amount of Funding Requested:

CHANGE LoftEEEEEE

Project Description:

Our goal with the *Loft* project is to learn the fundamentals of the video game-making process from initial conception to final product. We seek to make a full-fledged game from scratch using the Gamemaker Studio 2 engine, complete with custom visuals and sound in conjunction with the source code.

We draw our initial inspiration from our desire to design a game where players can ultimately create art, despite it not being an objective or explicitly encouraged. Much like how a functioning computer can be built in Minecraft, or how trigonometry lessons can be taught in Half-Life: Alyx, *Loft* will present innate opportunities for alternate objectives through its mechanics, but it will be entirely dependent on the player to manipulate said mechanics for artistic purposes.

Broadly, we envision the final product's gameplay to be split between a day-in-the-life simulator of an artist's life (with a focus on decision-making and resource management) and a Japanese bullet-hell action-arcade experience. Additionally, we expect to include narrative elements, bridging the seemingly disparate game modes and making the game story-driven.

Funding for this project will go towards purchasing three Gamemaker Studio 2 licenses, of which we are currently using 30-day free trials. As of late September, we have already completed a mock-up of the main room with interactive elements and custom sprites. For the past month, we have met weekly for two hours, setting deadlines and goals for each week, and we expect to continue holding these meetings until the project is done. Our timeline is expanded upon in the Project Milestones section, but we hope to have a complete, playable version by early January.

While all three of the team members are avid video game players and will collaborate on nearly all aspects of the game, we expect that Jacques will spearhead the art, narrative, and game design elements while Sam and Eric work on coding the game itself. Though Sam and Eric are both experienced coders, they have not used the Gamemaker language before, and as such will be focused on learning the intricacies and best practices for the language. We hope the skills to be learned and wisdom to be gained through this project will directly support our desires to all be involved in the gaming industry as career paths.

Project Milestone:

10/3/20 - Loft outline completed
10/20/20 - Finish rooms, begin scripting.
11/12/20 - Finish skeleton bullet hell game
11/20/20 - finish draft 1 dialogue
1/15/21 - finish draft 1 of game.
1/20/21 - initiate kickstarter

Short Bios:

Sam: Sam Schwartz is a rising fourth year at the University of Chicago doing the Joint BA/MS program in Music/Computer Science, respectively. Outside of class, he is a member of many musical ensembles, is a resident assistant in one of the dorms, and works at the Media Arts, Data, and Design Center at UChicago. His love of video games is the driving force behind his selected fields of study, and he is excited to have this opportunity to work on a video game project.

Eric: Eric Han is a third-year computer science student at Case Western Reserve University. Currently, he works part-time at Eradani as a full stack developer, where he develops web applications using JavaScript frameworks. He spends his free time playing video games, watching movies, or coding random projects.

Jacques: Jacques Manjarrez is a rising fourth year at the University of Chicago double-majoring in physics and cinema with a passion for art, video games, and storytelling. When he isn't making independent shorts, or solving p-sets for class, you can usually find him at the Art Institute at the University of Chicago, strolling through the same Monet exhibit for the 10th time that day. If it's raining, you will more likely find him playing indie games back home with a hot mug of tea.