

CONSTITUTION OF THE IGDA GAME DESIGN SIG

INTRODUCTION

The IGDA Game Design SIG was officially approved on 22 December 2008. This constitution sets forth the structure, policies, and practices of the official IGDA Game Design SIG.

Numerous people were involved in the production of this document, included spirited discussion throughout the SIG's founding membership. Thanks to the Constitution Committee and all SIG members who participated in the debates.

The body of the constitution was written by Josh Sutphin. Detailed reviews and edits were conducted by Altug Isigan, Sande Chen, Michael Lubker, Ryon Levitt, and Brandon Van Every. The initiative evaluation questions were proposed by Judy Tyrer.

The constitution was ratified by a public vote of the GDSIG membership. A Quorum of at least 25 members of the GDSIG, and a 2/3 supermajority of votes cast, was required for ratification. The complete record of all votes cast by members, and the verbatim constitution so ratified, is permanently archived at <http://gdsig.wordpress.com> . This archive shall remain conspicuously available to the general public in perpetuity, whether or not they be IGDA members or GDSIG members.



MISSION STATEMENT

The IGDA Game Design Special Interest Group (GDSIG) connects game designers from all over the world with a common purpose: to improve our practice and understanding of game design.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The Game Design SIG is an inclusive organization. Members must have an interest in contributing to the game design community; other than that, there are no specific requirements, e.g. shipped games etc. IGDA membership is strongly recommended, but not required.

Membership to the SIG is obtained by signing up to the official IGDA [Game Design SIG Mailing List](#). Membership is reserved to actual persons, not to spammers or duplicate e-mail accounts. A person who wishes to join the SIG must give a reason why they want to join, either directly to a list moderator, or to the SIG mailing list by a proxy representative. The reason can be minimal, but it needs to be given, and have relevance to the subject of game design.

An unruly member may be prevented from posting on the SIG mailing list by a Moderator, but this does not constitute a loss of membership from the SIG, and Moderators shall not prevent such members from receiving SIG emails. A member can be **expelled** from the SIG; see the section on Expulsion. A member expelled from the SIG shall not: hold any SIG office, vote in any SIG election, receive or post any e-mails on the SIG mailing list, use any SIG forum, or attend any SIG meeting in person that is conspicuously designated as a “GDSIG Members Only” meeting.

THE RIGHT OF PETITION

The first and foremost power reserved to the members of the SIG is that of petition. A petition can call any SIG business to a vote of the membership. This includes but is not limited to: amendments to the Constitution; creation, amendment, or repeal of General Policies; special election of officers, or their recall; creation, funding, or cancellation of Initiatives; disciplinary actions taken against members, or appeals of disciplinary action; and expulsion of members, or reinstatement of expelled members.

Only SIG members may sign petitions. A petition requires signatures from 10 members to be valid. When a member signs a petition, it does not indicate that the member

supports or opposes the issue that the petition addresses. Rather, it indicates that the member wants the issue to be called to a vote of the membership. No special format is required for a petition, but the signatures must be legible if handwritten, and verifiable by the Elections Board as belonging to members.

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

The SIG is governed by three three-person groups: the **Executive Board**, the **Peer Mediation Committee**, and the **Elections Board**. All nine positions are democratically-elected, one-year seats.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board is responsible for the day-to-day governance of the SIG, communication to the public and SIG partners, organizing events, and coordination of SIG initiatives. General Policies are developed, set, or altered by the Executive Board and made available to the SIG member base via a GDSIG **General Policies Statement** to be found on the SIG's official pages. There are three seats on the Executive Board:

- The **SIG Chair** acts as the primary spokesperson for and leader of the SIG, and is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Executive Board to ensure that the SIG's mission and goals are fulfilled. The Chair also acts as the SIG's general treasurer.
- The **Initiatives & Events Director** is responsible for coordinating SIG initiatives and public events
- The **P.R. & Resources Director** is responsible for day-to-day public relations and the SIG's web presence (wiki, blogs, forums, etc.), as well as management of the membership roll (with the support of the Game Design SIG Mailing-List Admins)

PEER MEDIATION COMMITTEE

The Peer Mediation Committee is a three-person panel that is responsible for addressing grievances and complaints, enforcing any necessary disciplinary actions, and generally holding the SIG to a high standard of ethics and professional conduct. The Peer Mediation Committee is composed of three seats having equal power and responsibility.

The rules in the General Policies Statement are enforced by the Peer Mediation Committee. Violations of the rules stated in the GDSIG General Policies Statement are handled by the Peer Mediation Committee on a case-by-case basis.

Members may file a general grievance against other members, or groups of members, by submitting the complaint to the Peer Mediation Committee. The Peer Mediation Committee is responsible for addressing the grievance, first via non-binding mediation. If mediation fails, then the involved parties can agree to accept binding arbitration, although none of the parties are required to do so. If the involved parties agree to accept binding arbitration, then the Peer Mediation Committee shall resolve the dispute by a simple majority vote, in no less than three days and no more than two weeks. The Peer Mediation committee shall notify all parties of its decision, create a public record of each committee member's votes, and enter the reasoning behind the committee's decision into the record. If the vote of the committee is not unanimous, the reasoning of the dissenting committee member shall also be entered into the record.

RECUSAL

Peer Mediation Committee officers shall not mediate or arbitrate any grievance to which they are a direct party. Any such officers shall be recused and replaced with temporary officers, for the purpose of resolving the specific mediation and arbitration only. The sitting officers of the Peer Mediation Committee will continue to exercise the powers of their office regarding other SIG business. The temporary officers shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the officers addressing the grievance. If those officers in turn are deemed by aggrieved parties to have direct involvement in the grievance, those officers shall again be recused, and again vote for their temporary replacements, until the officers addressing the grievance are no longer direct parties to the grievance.

ELECTIONS BOARD

The Elections Board is responsible for verifying signatures gathered for petitions, conducting General and Special Elections, counting and verifying the votes in elections, and publishing the results of elections. The Elections Board is composed of three seats having equal power and responsibility.

If any office of the Elections Board is left Vacant, temporary Elections Board officer(s) shall be appointed by a simple majority vote of the Peer Mediation Committee. If, due to Vacancy or incapacity, the Peer Mediation Committee does not have 3 officers, then the temporary Elections Board officer(s) shall be appointed by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board. If, due to Vacancy or incapacity, the Executive Board does not have 3 officers, then the SIG membership shall select temporary Elections Board officer(s) by any means it can agree upon. The temporary Elections Board officer(s) shall

serve until the next Special Election or General Election, at which time their replacements will be elected.

ELECTION PROCEDURE

The election procedure is used for any and all SIG business called to a vote of the membership. A General Election is announced on January 1st to elect the Executive Board. Another General Election is announced on July 1st to elect the Peer Mediation Committee and the Elections Board. In addition, a Special Election is announced whenever any valid petition is submitted to the membership. Any SIG member not barred from office, including SIG officers, may run for any office, but may only run for 1 office per election. If at any time an office is left Vacant, any member not barred from office may declare their candidacy for the office, and thereby announce a Special Election to fill the vacant office. Officers so elected serve until the next General Election for that office.

ELECTION SCHEDULE

An election takes 6 weeks and 3 days, divided into four periods:

1. **Announcement – 2 weeks.** Announcement of an election is triggered when any valid statement of candidacy for office, or any valid petition, is submitted to the membership via the SIG mailing list. Once an election is so announced, all further business for this election must be submitted within the announcement period. The membership publicly discusses the business during this time, to increase awareness of the issues involved. If an Elections Board does not exist, it is formed.
2. **Review – 2 weeks.** No new business may be submitted for this election. The composition of the Elections Board must be finalized. The Elections Board prepares a ballot containing only the business submitted during the Announcement period, and presents it to the membership. Public review and discussion of the business continues.
3. **Voting – 2 weeks.** The Elections Board opens the polls and collects votes by secret ballot.
4. **Results – 3 days.** The Elections Board closes the polls and counts the votes. Then it reports all votes counted, any failures of quorum, all officers elected, and all business passed or failed to the SIG mailing list.

CASTING VOTES

Votes are cast by secret ballot. The Elections Board officers are the only people authorized to view the votes. Voters submit their votes directly to the Elections Board via email. Members must use the same email address that they currently use for the SIG mailing list. The Elections Board will reject any vote that comes from an unrecognized email address.

All votes of the SIG membership upon any SIG business require a Quorum of the membership to pass. The Quorum for any SIG business is 25 members. If the Quorum is not fulfilled, then the business does not pass. This can, for instance, leave the SIG without any newly elected officers. In such a case, the previous officers, policies, or conditions of the SIG remain in place without change. If officers are not elected due to a failure of Quorum, then new elections will be held to elect them, until a Quorum is fulfilled.

Unless otherwise stated, a simple majority of votes passes the business and is the action of the members. The action of the members takes precedence over actions by SIG officers in all matters.

IMMEDIATE EFFECT

Any business which passes the SIG, with the exception of electing new officers, takes effect immediately upon the announcement of its passage by the Elections Board.

INAUGURATION

New officers are inaugurated 1 week after the election results are announced by the Elections Board. In the interim, the old officers of the SIG preside and carry out their duties, unless they are removed by votes of No-Confidence or Expulsion. Such officers are removed from office immediately, creating a Vacancy.

NO-CONFIDENCE RULES

A "**petition for no-confidence**" is the means of removing elected officials from office before the end of their term(s). The petition must state the officer(s) to be removed. A valid petition obligates the SIG to immediately Announce a Special Election with a "**vote of no-confidence**" as the business to be voted upon. The petition may name a group of officers to be removed, but the members vote to remove each officer individually, not as a group. A Quorum of the membership is required for a vote of no-confidence upon an individual officer to pass. If 2/3 of the votes cast upon an individual officer are in favor of removal, then that officer is removed from office immediately. The officer is barred from holding that particular office for 1 year from the date he or she is removed from office. The officer may run for other offices.

EXPULSION

A member can be expelled from the SIG by a vote of the membership. No other authority can expel a member from the SIG. In particular, as the SIG is a self-governing entity, a loss or lapse of IGDA membership does not affect one's membership in the SIG. A valid petition calls the expulsion of a member to a vote. A Quorum of the membership is required for a vote of expulsion to pass. If 75% of the votes cast support the expulsion, then it is passed and goes into effect immediately.

An expelled person can be reinstated as a SIG member by a vote of the membership. A valid petition calls the reinstatement of a member to a vote. A Quorum of the membership is required for a vote of reinstatement to pass. If 75% of the votes cast support the reinstatement, then it is passed and goes into effect immediately.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution can be brought to a vote by a valid petition. A Quorum of the membership is required for an Amendment to pass. If 2/3 of the votes cast support the Amendment, then it is passed and goes into effect immediately. The Elections Board is responsible for updating and republishing the SIG Constitution within two weeks.

INITIATIVES

- Initiatives are autonomous and focused sub-projects of the SIG, managed directly by teams of SIG members, volunteers or and supporting organizations. In order to start operating, they must get the approval of the SIG Executive Board.

PROPOSING AN INITIATIVE

Initiative proposals should consist of a brief overview of the initiative, submitted directly to the Executive Board, providing:

- A high concept or mission statement which provides information about the goals, scope and limitations (e.g. duration, locations, platforms), intended work product(s) (e.g. websites, publications, discussion groups, etc.), and intended audience.

- A description of the way in which the initiative is organized, how it will handle rotation of leadership roles, and other internal policies to which the Peer Mediation Committee can refer to in case of grievances within the initiative.
- A list of individuals (or, if it applies, involved organizations) in support of the initiative.
- Provide its own treasurer if the initiative will require a budget.
- Contact person(s)

When an initiative proposal is received, within no less than three days and no more than two weeks, the Executive Board must vote to approve or reject the proposal. The Executive Board may, but is not required to, accompany rejections with advice or suggestions.

PROPOSING EVALUATION

The Executive Board may consider the following questions when evaluating a proposal:

- Does it serve the needs of the SIG membership?
- Does it have sufficient support to continue without the originator(s)?
- Is it feasible?
- Does it fit within the goals of the SIG?
- Does it retain the SIG's focus, or dilute its resources?
- Is it a priority?

INITIATIVE STATUS AND REPORTS

Approved and active initiatives are required to submit an annual report of their activities to the SIG Executive Board until the end of the calendar year. This report will be integrated into the SIG's Annual Report which is presented to the IGDA Executive Board.