2025 CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

Game in Lab is a program co-created by Asmodee, board games industry leader, and Innovation Factory, a French non-profit association specialized in collective intelligence and innovation.

Game in Lab supports scientific production and diffusion and community exchanges. We animate a network of transdisciplinary scholars and game professionals, and provide funding to research projects.

Our mission is to promote the valorisation and recognition of board games as a generator of societal value. We are convinced that academic research on board games and play has an essential role to play in that endeavor.

To know more about our actions, please consult our website:
https://www.game-in-lab.org/en/310-2/

THE 2025 EDITION OF GAME IN LAB'S CALL FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PROJECTS ON BOARD GAMES IS OPEN.

OBJECT OF THE CALL

We invite international research teams to submit a project proposal on any research topic related to board games taken broadly. This year, special attention will be given to projects that investigate the following areas:

- **Sustainability, Justice and Inclusion:** The role of tabletop games in addressing crises of environmental and social sustainability, and in promoting social justice and inclusion. Gathering and interpreting evidence about the role of games in promoting climate action and/or driving sustainable transitions in society as well as in supporting social action on inclusion. We are particularly interested in material considerations, including evidence about players' views on sustainability in games and the narratives about sustainability communicated through games' mechanics, dynamics, aesthetics and components. Likewise, we are interested in investigations of the diverse histories of board games, gaming, and gaming community, cultural analyses of how games encode, promote or foster diversity through their mechanics, dynamics and aesthetics.

- **Healthy People and/or Planet**: The potential of games to support healthy lives, therapeutic applications, and community health and resilience. We are particularly interested in the phenomena of "eco-anxiety" and the role of gaming in addressing this. Additionally, we are interested in research addressing the pleasures of play.

- **Cultural Heritage**: The preservation and promotion of games as important sites of cultural heritage and history and/or the use of games in heritage research and preservation.

- **Civic engagement, supporting democracy and social competence:** The role of games in supporting citizens to engage in democratic processes and participate in other areas of social life. The role of games in combating misinformation and helping citizens develop competencies to participate actively in social life. The role of games in generating participatory decision making.

This year we will allocate funding across two research tracks:

- **Track 1**: **Fundamental Research**. Research that expands knowledge and understanding of games, explores theoretical concepts and underlying principles of games, or develops new frameworks of analyses.

- **Track 2**: **Applied Research with a social action dimension**. This track will fund action research that leverages existing knowledge about games to address social issues and address specific problems or challenges through collaboration with communities, practitioners or other stakeholders. These projects will generate actionable insights and proposals, e.g. for educators, health practitioners, communities, and other contexts in which games can make a difference. Evaluation projects will not be considered.

You may identify for which track you wish to be considered, otherwise the review committee will assign proposals to the track where they best fit.

The appointed research teams will receive a financial grant from Game in Lab to support a research project in relation with board games. All academic disciplines, ranging from sociology to health sciences are accepted, whether in applied or fundamental sciences. Interdisciplinary proposals are welcomed.

A central component of scientific inquiry is required.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate persuasively the relevance of the project to board games studies or the use of applied board games, to other disciplines. An annotated bibliography of the games used in the research protocol will be provided when relevant.

This grant cannot be allocated to the design, production or evaluation of games. Such projects are not considered eligible.

Game in Lab's scientific committee assesses the received proposals on the basis of scientific robustness and the foreseen expected contribution to the general scientific knowledge on board games. The committee seeks to maintain a relative balance in Game in Lab's portfolio in terms of disciplines and topics represented.

The research grants will support projects which last up to 24 months. The grant could be renewed depending on circumstances.

This year's endowment is 45 000€ for proposals considered in Track 1 and 40 000€ for proposals considered in Track 2. The final number of appointed projects will vary depending on individual endowment.

Each project is eligible for a maximum grant of 20 000€.

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

This call for proposal welcomes applications from international research teams.

At least one of the project's leaders has to be actively affiliated with a research institution (public or private) **at the time of application, and for the duration of the project**. This institution will co-sign a research convention with Asmodee. They will perceive and administer the funds on behalf of the appointed teams. They should commit to allocating the entirety of the subvention dedicated to the research actions to the appointed team. Any administrative fees required by the host institution to manage the grant have to be included explicitly in the detailed budget. Such fees cannot exceed 10% of the requested sum.

The application should include 2 official engagement letters from the host institution:

- One letter from the head of the research department or institution that hosts and accounts for the scientific activities of the project leader.

- One letter from the administrative departments that will financially administer the grant.

Applications from public research institutions will receive special attention. They can be associated with other institutions, private or public.

EXPECTED RESEARCH OUTCOMES

The application should specify the expected **project's outcomes and deliverables**.

The appointed teams are expected to contribute to Game in Lab's diffusion and scientific popularization actions in the form of articles (scientific or otherwise), published on Game in Lab's website, or in other journals or media. Project leaders will also be invited to attend events organized or supported by Game in Lab.

An editorial calendar describing the milestones and expected communication deliverables will be shared at the start of the project.

Examples of deliverables: a project summary presentation outlining the key elements of the research, a yearly project status, and a final report presenting the main findings and conclusions.

Any publication or communication will mention the financial support of Game in Lab as appropriate.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Personal salaries of full time or tenure research personnels are not eligible.

The grant can be used to fund the material, field activities, travel or missions needed to conduct the project. Appointment of non permanent research engineers or other technical

experts can be covered by the grant (interns, contractors, research engineers, …). However, the application must explain and justify the appointment of contractors if they are to carry out a significant amount of research, explaining why this could not be carried out by the principal investigator.

The budget can include several funding sources besides Game in Lab's.

The allocation can be renewed once, for an extended 12-month period.

Applications will only be sent for review if their budget is eligible.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are [submitted online](#).

Attachments, appendices and other relevant documents can be attached to the [online application form](#) as a zip file or as individual files.

The application platform allows the update of an already submitted application up to the deadline.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Your applications should include the following attachments:

- A PDF document describing the project
- CV of the project leader(s), including a list of relevant publications
- Estimated budget (including administrative fees from home institution when applicable)
- Bibliography
- Ludography (selection of games used for the study and justification of the selection)

- 2 engagement letters from the home institution (one from the Head of the research department or institute to which the project leader is affiliated, one from the administrative department in charge of the management of the budget).
- In case of co-funding: letters of support from the concerned funding institutions
- Any other piece of information as needed

Applications will only be sent for review if they contain all required documents.

KEY DATES

- **Application deadline**: 15 September 2025 at noon (Paris time, GMT+2)

- **Publication of the list of selected projects**: January 2026

- **Appointed teams' formal acceptation**: January 2026

- **Final approval of Asmodee - Host Institution:** April 2026