



IGI: A year in review

Report from 2016-17

IGI Companies

- CCP
- Solid Clouds
- Lumenox
- Novomatic LS
- Locatify
- 1939 Games
- Mousetrap
- Rosamosi
- Radiant Games

IGI Board (2016-17)

Board members

- Vignir Örn Guðmundsson, Chairman (Radiant Games/CCP)
- Stefán Björnsson, Vice Chairman (Solid Clouds)
- Steinunn Anna (Locatify)
- Eldar Ástþórsson (CCP)
- Ólafur Andri Ragnarsson (Novamatic LS/HR)

Deputy members

- Haukur Steinn Logason (Radiant Games/Gagarín)
- Margrét Júlíana Sigurðardóttir (Rosamosi)
- Burkni Óskarsson (Lumenox)
- Kristinn Árni Lár (QuizUp/Kolibri)

Executive Summary

The current IGI board was elected at the 2016 Annual Meeting on April 5th, 2016. The first board meeting was held on May 3rd, 2016. In total, during the boards term, there were 11 board meetings held.

IGI Policy event (“stefnumótun”) was held on May 24th, 2016. The actionable issues from the event became the guide for the board’s term. The list of actionables included: Following up on the Innovation Bill passed by Alþingi in April 2016, collaborating on Slush PLAY, and starting the IGI Community Group.

Good progress was made during the term on many important issues, but in others we were not able to invest our time. Overall, we can be relatively satisfied with the term. With many changes of personnel at SI, we were not at full capacity for a couple of spans during the term.

Ahead lie many opportunities for IGI. Strengthening the relationship between IGI and its grassroots community, revisiting our partnership with NGI, further industry analysis and forecasts, and continued lobbying for a healthier game industry environment in Iceland.

Key topics from IGI's 2016-17 Guiding Policy

1. Following up on the 2016 Innovation Bill
2. Continued collaboration between Slush PLAY and IGI
3. The foundation of the IGI Community Group
4. Double Taxation Agreement set up with Japan
5. Computer Science: Mandatory in elementary schools
6. Iceland's game industry environment VS other countries
7. Support for Keilir's new game development track

1. Following up on the 2016 Innovation Bill

Description	Status
<p>The Innovation Bill was proposed at Alþingi in April, 2016. It included changes to taxation of stock-options and convertible bonds, tax-breaks for foreign specialists, tax-breaks for angel investors, and increased tax-refund for company R&D investments.</p> <p>At the time of IGI's Policy event last year, it had only been proposed, not passed. Therefore, IGI and SI wanted to provide any assistance, if needed, for it to pass successfully.</p> <p>Additionally, IGI viewed the bill as just the beginning of a larger transition.</p>	<p>The Innovation Bill was passed at Alþingi on June 2nd, 2016. It is a great milestone for innovation-driven companies in Iceland. However, it should only be the beginning.</p> <p>Since the bill was passed, there have been two new elected governments. The CAD government first, then later the VBD government.</p> <p>The VBD government has stated that it intends to lift the cap completely of tax-refunds for R&D, which would be another great milestone.</p>

2. Continued collaboration between Slush PLAY and IGI

Description	Status
<p>In April 2015, the first edition of Slush PLAY was held in Reykjavik. It was a small event, around 200 guests, but a successful one.</p> <p>In September 2016, there is a plan to have the 2nd edition of Slush PLAY.</p> <p>IGI wants to support Icelandic Startups as much as possible, since the event has good value for Icelandic game companies.</p>	<p>Slush PLAY, 2nd edition, was held on September 28-29, 2016. It was a bigger than the 1st edition, around 300 guests.</p> <p>The event included dozens of talks, pitch competition, VR hackathon, game showcasing, Marioki, big party at the whale museum, speaker snowmobile trip and dinner.</p> <p>Icelandic Startups is currently evaluating the feasibility of a 3rd edition. IGI has worked closely with them on the evaluation. VR is currently not as strong as a key selling point (market conditions, CCP out of VR, etc).</p>

3. The foundation of the IGI Community Group

Description	Status
<p>In the early years of IGI, there were active meetups for game development enthusiasts in Iceland. Over the years, however, the number of meetups diverged to zero.</p> <p>One of the issues with the most support at the IGI Policy event was to rebirth more community activities. Meetups, game jams, etc.</p> <p>The proposal from the event was that a IGI Community Group would be founded.</p>	<p>Following the Policy event, the Community Group was formed. Its members are Haukur Steinn Logason, Alexandra Bjargardóttir, Jóhannes Sigurðsson, and Torfi Ásgeirsson.</p> <p>The impact of the Community Group has been phenomenal. The first Game Dev Meetup organized by the group was held in CCP in September, 2016 where around 150 people attended.</p> <p>Overall, the group has held numerous events since then. Meetups, game jams, beer nights, and more.</p>

4. Double Taxation Agreement set up with Japan

Description	Status
<p>With Sony, Nintendo, and other Japanese publishers having a significant presence in the global game industry, it is very important for companies to not be double-taxed on revenues that are paid from Japan. It can cut both cash flow and profits of companies.</p> <p>This issue is something that IGI has raised for a long time now. In general, this is an issue for any exporter that derives revenues from Japan (e.g. fisheries as well). IGI will continue to raise the issue with the Icelandic government, especially the Ministry of Finance.</p>	<p>IGI is very happy to see that in May, 2017 the Icelandic government started its negotiations with Japanese government on forming a Double Taxation Agreement between the two countries. It is common that such negotiations can take quite a bit of time (i.e. months to a couple of years).</p> <p>IGI will continue to monitor the negotiations.</p>

5. Computer Science: Mandatory in elementary schools

Description	Status
<p>With coding being a key part in the literacy of the 21st century, IGI believes that every child should get a fair introduction to Computer Science early in their lives.</p> <p>Currently, the Icelandic elementary curriculum does not mention Computer Science in a proper fashion.</p> <p>This is not about getting more coders to work for game companies. It's about fair preparation for the next generation. Making video games is just one of many ways to use those skills.</p>	<p>IGI took part in X-Hugvit's campaign in Fall of 2016 ahead of parliament elections. Vignir (chairman) led the project of raising awareness for the issue.</p> <p>Additionally, Vignir (chairman) and Stefanía (CCP) took part in RÚV's show on "the language of the future", which focused on why coding is an essential skill for the next generation.</p> <p>IGI will continue to raise the issue to government, especially the new Minister of Education</p>

6. Iceland's game industry environment VS. other countries

Description	Status
<p>In an ever-changing world, it is very important that we keep track of how the environment for game industries are changing around the world. Especially in key countries that we want to compare ourselves with, in one way or another.</p> <p>IGI wants to execute a comparison analysis of the game industry environment in Iceland compared to a few key countries.</p> <p>Such analysis can be an effective tool in raising awareness for where we can improve the environment and where we should aim to be.</p>	<p>In June 2017, IGI asked Northstack to perform the game industry comparison analysis. IGI requested that Sweden, Finland, UK and Canada would be the key countries analysed in comparison to Iceland.</p> <p>Northstack handed in the report in July. Due to various reasons (elections, delayed annual meeting, and more), we have not presented the highlights of the report until now.</p> <p>IGI intends to use the report to highlight to government and media where the game industry environment can improve.</p>

7. Support for Keilir's new game development track

Description	Status
<p>In January 2017, Keilir met with IGI to present their ideas for a new game development track. Keilir asked for IGI's backing on their case.</p> <p>IGI board agreed 100% to back Keilir's effort for the new track. IGI wrote a public support statement for Keilir and offered to be advisory to the school in its continued development of the track.</p>	<p>Unexpectedly, the Ministry of Education denied Keilir's proposal for the new track. This decision did come with reasonable arguments attached. Only explanation was that it simply was not possible.</p> <p>IGI sent out a public statement where we expressed our disappointment with the Ministry's decision.</p> <p>To this day, sadly, Keilir still has not opened the track. IGI will continue to make the case for why the track is a great opportunity and quite simply a "no-brainer".</p>

Looking ahead

- Strengthening the relationship between IGI and its grassroots community
- Revisiting our partnership with NGI
- Further industry analysis and forecasts
- Continued lobbying for a healthier game industry environment in Iceland